

THE METROPOLITAN.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONNUBIAL JOYS IN PERSPECTIVE—FILIAL INFLUENCE, MATERNAL INDULGENCE, AND
SISTERLY CONFIDENCE.

It would be very idly superfluous to describe the satisfaction of Mrs. Hartley on learning, upon her return from Lady Stephen's party, what had passed between Sir James Ridley and her daughter Margaretta during her absence. All this maternal gladness, and womanly triumph at success, shall be passed *sous silence*, while the narrative goes on to relate the more substantial consequences which arose from it.

If the mother and her favourite daughter had heretofore been addicted to *tête-à-tête* breakfastings, when the pleasure of them consisted wholly in the discussion of hopeful possibilities, it will be readily believed that the present position of affairs would render such a meeting a thousand times more delightful still; and accordingly, on the following morning, the arrangement which has been before described as so agreeable to the whole family, again took place;—that is to say, Mrs. Hartley and Margaretta enjoyed the shady retreat of the boudoir, Caroline the *dolce reposo* of her bed, and Constance and her friend Penelope the undisturbed possession of the drawing-room.

"Your conduct, my dearest love, through the whole of this business, has been most admirable, and justifies the hope that, with the noble fortune which your beauty and your talents have secured to you, your future existence will be a model of what the life of a well-educated young woman of fashion ought to be. I congratulate you, my darling child, with all the virtuous pride and tender fondness of a happy mother, rewarded for all her care!"

Such were the sounds that, in the crested pride of Mrs. Hartley, were uttered as she first met her daughter, who, having received the maternal salute with the philosophical sort of composure which made so essential a part of her character, replied, "Thank you, mamma. I am very glad it is done, I promise you; for he's such an uncommon fool, and so utterly devoid of everything like the spirit and feeling of a man, that it has not only been very dull work, but very difficult too, I do assure you. For though the idea of doing me this immense

honour has been gradually working its way into his obtuse brain from the first hour, I believe, that I set about the business, it was impossible to be sure that he would ever have had the courage to bestow the inestimable treasure of his person upon any mortal woman. However, thank Heaven, he has committed himself, and cannot possibly retract. So now, dear mamma, let us forget him as much as we possibly can, and talk about the things I must order, and the horses, and the carriages, and all that. You must remember, if you please, that though the most important part of the business is done, we must take good care not to let him get the bit between his teeth, which he has an extremely good inclination to do, I am certain, from his behaviour to his sister. I declare to Heaven, mamma, that if his estate were double, and that he could put a coronet, instead of a bloody hand, upon my carriage, I would not marry him if I thought I could not continue to manage him."

"Fear nothing, my dearest love, on that score," replied her mother. "The same masterly mind which has already seen through all the complicated little machinery of his contemptible character, and has so managed its springs and its screws as to make him do precisely the thing which it seemed to be the great object of his life to guard against, has no great reason to fear that, as power strengthens, means of using it will decrease. He may, perhaps, be naturally stubborn, but he is a fool, Margarett; whilst you, dearest, are firm, with tact and talent to make him hate all he loves, and love all he hates, if such be your will."

"*Ainsi soit il*," replied the young lady. "But now, mamma, for goodness' sake tell me what I am to do about clothes. You are so constantly employed *à chanter misère*, that I give you my honour I am terrified lest you should not be able to raise the sum necessary. With less than five hundred pounds, I neither can nor will attempt to carry the thing through. Were I in love, you know, mamma, it would be quite a different sort of business; but I would a great deal rather make up my mind not to marry at all just at present, than marry such an animal as this without the comfort of having a few nice things at setting off."

The complexion of Mrs. Hartley was a little heightened in colour by this speech. She had made up her mind, notwithstanding the unfortunate circumstance of her having the family fortunes entirely at her command, to raise the sum of three hundred pounds for the "joyful occasion" at present under discussion; but the addition to this so stoutly demanded by her daughter rather startled her. She remembered, however, the *firmness* upon which she had just complimented the young lady, and replied, with great gentleness,

"I had hoped, dearest, that three hundred might have done, especially as I intend to take care that an ample allowance for pin-money shall make part of the settlement. I therefore thought, my love, that what with the presents we shall get out of him, and by taking care that nothing was bought excepting what would contribute to your appearance, we could have done very well with that sum—and, alas! though I never, since she was able to ask it, have refused my darling Margaret anything without a pang, and at this moment every

indulgent feeling is, of course, multiplied a thousand fold, yet, with all this, my dearest girl, I know not what on earth I can do to raise such a sum as you mention."

"Where there is a will there is a way, mamma. The proverb is somewhat musty, but not the less true for that. And as to getting presents out of him, I do assure you that, though I am certainly not quite in despair as to recovering the power of exerting myself again by-and-bye, I am positively weary and worn out with the unceasing series of exertions I have been making, in order to persuade my golden calf that black was white, and hatred love. In this I have succeeded, and now I positively must repose a little. Whatever you think you may be able to do in the way of making him fancy it a fine thing to be generous, pray do it—I have not the slightest objection; but as for me, I shall do nothing beyond giving a few hints about the carriage, or a word or two, perhaps, about the house;—I will not go begging or coaxing for decent clothes to wear, that you may depend upon, mamma—and, in one word, which may just as well be spoken first as last, unless you can let me have five hundred pounds down for my wedding clothes, I will not marry Sir James Ridley at all."

Mrs. Hartley knew her favourite daughter well, and would hardly have carried matters to the dangerous extremity of refusal if her demand had been double. As it was, she got up, kissed her forehead, declared that she was perfectly right in being steady upon a point to which she judiciously attached so much importance, vowed she would rather sell her plate than disappoint her, and then led the conversation to squares, and gardens, and terraces, for the delightful purpose of ascertaining which would furnish a residence most consonant to the taste of her darling child, hinting, meanwhile, that she thought she might herself have some little influence in leading her future son-in-law to select what she should recommend.

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Whether it were that Constance felt particularly anxious that morning respecting the affairs of Penelope, or that she felt no inclination to discuss her own, may be doubtful; but whatever the cause, the two friends no sooner found themselves *seule à seule* over their breakfast-table, than the affianced bride began talking to the long-betrothed maiden on the painful subject of the difficulties which were still likely, for a period most sadly indefinite, to keep her and her beloved asunder.

Poor Penelope, despite all her efforts to prevent it, shed tears over this almost hopeless theme, till, ashamed of the gloom she was bringing to mix with the happier prospects of her friend, she assumed an air of cheerfulness, and said, "By-the-bye, Constance, I am rather sorry that fate and fortune did not give you Mr. Fitzosborne for an adorer, instead of Mr. Mortimer; for albeit he is no poet, he is, as I happened to learn last night, nephew to one who has great interest, or rather great authority, in the only direction where poor Markham can look for aid; so, if it had happened that he had fallen in love with you, who knows but that we might have been married together? I am quite sure, Constance, that my elderly young ladyhood is becoming every day more irksome both to mamma and Margaret, and I feel

certain that the addresses of CAPTAIN Markham might be accepted with very little opposition."

Constance listened to this with great attention; and though she certainly did not make up her mind to join in Penelope's wish respecting Mr. Fitzosborne, it occurred to her as possible that some occasion might arise in which, slight as was her acquaintance with him, she might so state the case of Markham as to interest the great man's nephew in his favour. But the hope was much too vague to be spoken of to one whom it concerned so nearly, and Constance therefore turned the conversation into another channel by asking Penelope what she thought of Mr. Marsh's devoted attention to Mrs. Hartley. "Were it not," she said, "that I believe your mother to be much too wise a woman to marry a man more than a dozen years her junior, I should really begin to suspect something."

"And did I not think it impossible that any young man so wealthy as Mr. Marsh is said to be would bestow himself upon a middle-aged lady with three grown-up daughters, I should suspect too," replied Penelope. "But it is too absurdly unlikely to think of for a moment. I therefore conclude that Mr. Marsh is one of those cautious men of money, who prefer the safe honour of fluttering round a handsome widow, not quite young enough to be irresistible, to the danger of raising hopes in the tender bosoms of her portionless daughters.—But, mercy on me! there is mamma's voice already! What can make her come down so soon?"

Penelope was not mistaken; it was her mother's voice which she had heard; and what was more extraordinary still, the person she addressed, and who was emerging with her at so unusually early an hour from the boudoir beatitudes of confidential gossip, and a committee on toilet ways and means, was no other than her sister Margaretta, who very rarely, if permitted to breakfast up stairs, thought it necessary to appear below till the carriage was announced as ready to receive herself and her unblemished dress.

That "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," is a truth incontrovertible; and whether this fulness proceed from joy or sorrow; from melting affection or from swelling vanity; from the longing to proclaim a triumph, or detail a grief; the necessity for the outpouring is the same, and can seldom be resisted, as long as ears in any way fitted to be recipients are within reach. Few young ladies were less disposed to trouble an elder sister by confidential disclosures than Miss Margaretta Hartley; but no sooner had she settled with her mamma the knotty point respecting the five hundred pounds, than that *épanchement de cœur* of which we have been speaking came so strongly upon her, as to make her start up and exclaim,

"Now, mamma, let us go down stairs, and announce the news in the drawing-room. I confess I feel some little curiosity to see how Miss Constance will take it. She has always taken especial good care to let me know, that, in comparison to the sage Penelope, she considered me as little better than a figure in a puppet-show—and now, perhaps, I may appear to her of rather more importance. Perhaps the erudite Penelope herself, too, may be brought to the wholesome conviction, that when a decent amount of thousands per annum are

laid at the feet of a portionless damsel, it is quite as well to take them up and spend them as to throw them away. You must announce it, you know, and pray do it in good style. *Allons !*"

And so saying, the triumphant fair one passed her arm under that of her mother, and they descended together to the drawing-room.

"What ! still at breakfast ?" exclaimed Mrs. Hartley gaily. "O you idle girls ! But you will leave sipping of your coffee, I suspect, when you hear what we are come to tell you. I have important news for you, my dearest Constance, which I hope and trust will be as delightful to your feelings as to mine. The friendship that unites us, my dear girl, will not long continue to be our only tie. Your brother, Constance, is about to become a very dear son to me—he is going to be married to my Margaretta."

Had not Constance so very often heard her brother declare that he was completely and for ever on his guard against all the young ladies who made love to him, she might perhaps have predicted such a termination to Margaretta's incessant exertions in that line as was now officially announced to her ; but well knowing the exceedingly high value Sir James set upon himself, and upon all that belonged to him in the way of worldly goods, she really did feel very considerably astonished, and it was not without some exertion of self-command that she succeeded in concealing how much she was so. Had her brother been as dear to her as a worthier brother would have been, the task would have been more difficult still ; as it was, she paid her compliments to her sister elect with so good a grace as to satisfy both the young lady and her mother, and to remove any impediment which her presence might otherwise have occasioned to the full flow of boastful satisfaction which filled their hearts.

"I shall be quite delighted if we can contrive to have you settle near me in town, Constance," said the future Lady Ridley, in a tone of condescending patronage. "But I am half afraid, dear, that Mr. Mortimer, even with your pretty little fortune to help him, will be obliged to choose his residence with more attention, probably, to economy than taste ; whereas your brother, you know, of course, may choose where he will. However, I dare say you will be very happy—you must not think of these sort of things now—and I shall always be ready, I am sure, to do anything I can, if we decide upon having a villa near town for the summer, you know—in the way of vegetables, I mean, and country air, and so forth. Thank Heaven, Mr. Mortimer is decidedly the fashion, and that makes an enormous difference. I have no doubt in the world that we shall go on delightfully well."

Constance thanked her with smiles that dimpled her fair face without an effort, and nothing could be more amicable than the tone in which the conversation was pursued.

Until this time, Penelope and Constance had been so decidedly the elected friends of each other, that Margaretta had rarely interfered between them by showing any particular attention to the sister of her beloved Sir James ; but now, either the sympathy created by their approaching relationship, or by the similarity of situation produced by their being both "engaged," led her to assume rather suddenly a

tone of affectionate *commérçage* that seemed intended to exclude every one else. "Don't you tremble, dear, to think of all we have got before us?" said she, suddenly dropping into a chair beside Constance, and so turning it as to present her back to her mother and sister. "Mercy on me! isn't it terrible?—dresses, carriages, horses, servants, furniture, and all the rest of it! Upon my word, we must endeavour to help each other in true sisterly style, or we shall never get through it. Have you made up your mind, dear, upon how much you shall allow yourself for your wedding clothes? You are too prudent, I am sure, to set about it without fixing a limit, though, happy girl! you have no one to restrict you but yourself. However, I feel confident, dear Constance, that you have too much good sense, particularly under the circumstances—I mean, you know, about Mr. Mortimer's not having a large fortune—I feel, I say, quite confident that you will not think of spending more than I shall;—the fact is, to be sure, that you will not really require half as many first-rate handsome things as I shall. I am to have five hundred pounds. Do you think, dear, that you shall go beyond that?"

"I shall probably not spend half of it, Margaretta," replied Constance, shaking her head gravely—"you forget how different our situations will be."

"O no, I don't, not the least in the world, I assure you, and I must say I think it shows great good sense in you to remember it also. There are many, many girls, Constance, who in the same situation would only remember that they *could* get at the money, if they chose it, without ever recollecting the absurdity of appearing in the same style as the bride of a poor man, as other people may do who have married a rich man, and even with a title, perhaps. But, to be sure, nothing in the world can be so lamentably absurd; because, you know, that nobody in existence can be taken in by it. Yet people *are* such fools sometimes! However, I must say I am delighted to find you are not one of them—I like you all the better for it, I assure you."

"I hope, my dear Margaretta, that we shall agree on all subjects as perfectly as we do on this," replied Constance. "I should be a very ill-chosen wife for Mr. Mortimer, were I to attempt in anything to vie with the wife of my brother in expense. I have no such purpose, I assure you."

"Then will you let me ask you, my dear, dearest Constance, whether you intend to have anything to do with lace? I confess I shall be exceedingly anxious to know how you decide upon that subject, because it makes an immense difference. We must neither of us think of trinkets, of course, excepting what our respective lords and masters may think it proper to present; and I feel so confident that my dear Sir James will do everything in the best possible style, that I have not an anxiety about it. How lucky it is for you, Constance, that you are so very handsome! Of course we cannot expect that Mr. Mortimer, elegant as he is in every way, can venture to turn his thoughts towards diamonds—I am afraid, indeed, that it would be quite as well that he should not think of pearls either. But you will be sure to look beautiful, my dear, without anything of the kind whatever—and that's an immense advantage, particularly under the cir-

cumstances—whereas *I—O* there is such a difference! It will be absolutely impossible, I am perfectly sure, for me to look tolerably decent when I am presented, unless I have good diamonds. However, I have not an anxiety upon the subject—not the least in the world, I give you my word—I feel so perfectly confident that Sir James will do exactly what is right and proper for a man in his position! I hope he is aware that such are my feelings. I don't know anything that would vex me more than his fancying I had any fear or anxiety about it; and I wish you would tell him, dearest Constance, if you can find an opportunity, that I have such perfect confidence in his doing exactly what is right, that I do not seem, you may say, ever to have turned my thoughts towards it—only, of course, you know, you won't say that I even mentioned the subject to you. Thank Heaven, I know that I may trust to your delicacy and right feeling, my dearest Constance, and for that reason I venture to talk to you without the slightest reserve."

Constance listened to all this with as much attention and as little contempt as she could, and with great sincerity assured her elected sister that she need not fear her repeating anything she said to her brother. This was not quite the promise which Margaretta wished to receive; she was fain, however, to be contented with it; but soon feeling a want of better sympathy in her present interesting and enviable situation, she returned up stairs, summoned the two ladies' maids of the household, and held council with them and her mother till summoned to the drawing-room to receive Sir James upon his first appearance in the family as a declared and accepted lover; and then, poor girl! all the rainbow tints of the projected silks and satins, amidst which her fancy had been swelling, seemed suddenly to vanish, and be succeeded by—I know not what may best describe the atmosphere of ennui, but it was that which now settled round her, and sent her down to enact the part she had set her to perform, with nothing but steadfastness of purpose to sustain her under what she felt to be a most prodigious bore. But this sufficed. She made her appearance, raised her timid eyes, averted her blushing cheek, gave her trembling hand, and performed every other part of the routine expected and required, with the most irreproachable propriety of demeanour.

CHAPTER XXV.

A BRILLIANT SOIREE—A NEW ACQUAINTANCE—PROFITABLE USE MADE OF AN OLD ONE.

So rapidly had these important events followed each other, that Constance almost felt bewildered by them, and everything connected with ordinary acquaintance and ordinary engagements were either wholly forgotten, or became so exceedingly unimportant as not to deserve a thought. Her whole heart and every moment of her time were hardly sufficient in her estimation as an offering to the man for whom it was henceforward her hope to live, and for whose sake she was more than willing, she was desirous, of giving up every other object. She felt almost oppressed by the novelty of her situation,

and would have given much, oh! very much, could she have been transported back to Appleby, there to have enjoyed, without ostentation or publicity, the society of Mortimer, and the unobtrusive and affectionate sympathy of the dear old friend she had left there.

But in such feelings, and such wishes, Constance had no partner. To have hid his love from the public eye would, in the opinion of Mr. Mortimer, have been to rob it of all the radiance, and all the glory which belonged of right to every circumstance connected with himself. He had long, indeed, considered himself as belonging to the world too legitimately to render any divorce from it either desirable or proper, and however sweetly he might warble away upon foolscap about love among roses and violets, the only practical idea he had upon the subject was, that a man who had selected and been accepted by a woman admired by the world of fashion, had done himself honour, whereas any other choice was disgraceful.

But these different and very contradictory feelings were not compared together, and all things went on in the natural course of London love-making, as well between the accomplished poet and the beautiful novice, as between the conceited dupe and his wily mistress. The "Morning Post" and the "Court Journal" announced the approaching happiness of both pair; young ladies tittered as they saw them pass, and young gentlemen raised their *lorgnettes*, whether near-sighted or not, in order to pronounce judgment on the choosers and the chosen.

But not for this did Mrs. Hartley deem the business of her London campaign over; for not only was her own particular, and as yet unacknowledged, matrimonial affair to be finally arranged, but her prophetic eye looked forward to the future through the present, and strong in purpose to outdo even Lady Dort herself in the splendour of her notoriety, as soon as the income of Mr. Marsh should be joined to her own, she was as eagerly bent upon increasing her circle, and bringing herself forward, as if she still had a splendid establishment to seek for her favourite daughter. She gave a regular dinner-party once in each week, and that too in a style greatly beyond anything she had before attempted; she showed herself, and her now more than ever interesting party wherever she was invited, contrived every where to speak of Sir James's opera-box as her own, talked of Mortimer as "dear Henry," and, in short, found herself advancing rapidly to very precisely the exact place she wished to attain.

But although this general success has been thus stated *en grand*, the detail of her first great literary *soirée* must not be omitted, as it led to some important results.

Mrs. Hartley would perhaps have been happier still when this triumphant evening arrived, had the now rather-eagerly-expected offer of the wealthy Marsh been actually made. But that prudent young man was determined to risk nothing unnecessarily; and the more he saw his elegant widow blaze before his eyes amidst all those evidences of wealth for which he was so keenly on the watch, the more anxious he became to render the acceptance of his audacious offer sure before he ventured to make it. As this system of tactics, however, naturally increased the devotion of his manner, and the vigilance of *les petits soins*, with which ladies of all ages love to be surrounded, Mrs.

Hartley's enjoyment of the brilliant hours now passing was not greatly lessened by the delay, and it would have been difficult to find any individual of the happy-seeming set that glittered through the spring-tide of the London season who was in all respects in so satisfactory a state of mind as herself.

Nothing could promise better than the evening in question ; wisely determined not to trust altogether to the intellectual resources of her expected guests for the success of this studied party, Mrs. Hartley had secured a professional lady and gentlemen in order to render her second drawing-room an agreeable refuge for any who might chance to find themselves wearying of the sublimity of the first. Another source of the confidence she felt that all would go well, arose from a promise which she had obtained from Mortimer that he would read one of his own compositions, not yet published, aloud. All the world too knew that one of her daughters was going to be very splendidly married, and that her beautiful guest had bestowed herself and her thousands on the popular poet whom all delighted to honour ; for on neither point had Mrs. Hartley, when driving round the circle of her friends with the news, bound them very strictly to secrecy, so that when she descended from her toilet to the drawing-rooms, robed in the most becoming style of "a very superior woman," who nevertheless was still *à pretension*, she was in the most happy state of spirits imaginable.

The rooms filled fast, and really had altogether less the air of being superlatively dull than is often the case where the company has been for the most part selected on the principle of intellectual superiority. Constance looked so very lovely that she might herself have furnished forth the material for a brilliant salon, if there had been nothing else to look and wonder at. A large packet had been brought to her room while she was in the act of dressing, which, despite the remonstrances of her maid, was immediately opened, and found to contain all the published works of Henry Mortimer, very simply bound, but accompanied by the following precious note :

"From Henry Mortimer to his Constance !
"The only muse whom henceforward he will ask to smile upon him !"

Could all the jewels of the earth have produced an equal throb of triumph and of joy in the heart of Constance ? O no ! She felt herself the very happiest and most honoured lady ever exalted into pre-eminence by the love of man. The feeling sparkled in her eye, glowed on her cheek, and dimpled round her lip. As she gave a parting look at her mirror before she left her room, she saw that she was beautiful, and for the first time in her life she deliberately acknowledged the fact, and rejoiced. Yet was she not content with herself—she wished to be lovelier still, richer, more nobly born ! She conceived that the greatest happiness Heaven could give must be the power of proving her devotion to such a being as Mortimer. She flattered herself that there was not one of his poems which she had not read again and again. Nevertheless, she determined not to sleep that night till she had turned over each of the precious volumes, and

rejoiced her spirit anew by the glory of the man whose name she so proudly hoped to bear. At the moment Mortimer entered, and that their eyes met, there was at least very perfect sympathy between them, for the heart of each swelled with delightful emotion. As to the exact proportion in which, in both cases, earth-born vanity was mixed with heaven-born love, it might be difficult to say; but it may be, that in this proportion too there was very perfect sympathy.

For the first half hour after his arrival he engrossed her wholly; having led her into the room appropriated to music, and placed her on one side of one of those double chairs invented for the purpose of making a *tête-à-tête* conspicuous, and himself in the other, he had the satisfaction of seeing every eye that entered fixed upon them, and nothing could be more elegant than the passionate devotion manifested by his manner, which, licensed by their proclaimed engagement, assumed all the happy confidence of successful love.

But here the *sympathy* existed no longer. Constance most certainly gloried in her illustrious lover; but, nevertheless, she wished not to exhibit her devotion in a crowd—she wished, on the contrary, from the very bottom of her heart, poor girl! that they could be transported to the old oak parlour at Appleby, with nobody but her dear grandmother to comment on their love.

Mr. Mortimer, however, was in one of his most delightful moods. He talked as none but a poet, and a poet of the world, could talk, and she soon forgot to think that she could be happier anywhere than she was then and there. But, alas for the shortness of all earthly joys! One bright half hour had scarcely passed away when the eye of the poet was caught by the sight of some person in the other room, whereupon he started from the place he had occupied, and hastily saying, "Excuse me for a moment," glided away.

Constance would have liked, perhaps, to have made one step forward in order to ascertain who it might be for whose sake he had found it possible to break off a conversation so delightful; but neither love nor vanity had so far overpowered all other feelings as to induce her even to bend her neck forward to gratify this wish, and for a few moments the admired of all eyes sat forsaken and alone.

"Do look at our beautiful Constance, Markham," said Penelope, who had ventured, while her mother's eyes, ears, and understanding were engaged elsewhere, to converse with all the freedom that a crowd permits with the only man whose conversation she wished to hear. "Do look at her, as she sits alone there in her beauty. The people moving round her seem to think she is too divine to approach. Mr. Mortimer was with her a minute ago, but he has left her. I marvel that anything could tempt him to do so. Go to her, dear friend, will you? and bring her here; or, no—you had better stay with her till her truant poet returns, while I perform some of my *domestic* duties, by paying my compliments to a few dozen of dear friends, to whom I have not yet spoken."

Markham looked half reproachfully at her, but did as he was bid, and the next moment found him in the seat which Mortimer had just occupied. Poetically in love though she was, Constance received her old friend kindly, and happening to remember what Penelope had

lately said to her concerning Mr. Fitzosborne, and his interest at the Admiralty, she questioned him upon it, and obtained all the information he could give on the subject, determined that if chance should favour her doing so, she would introduce the parties to each other.

This theme being exhausted, and no Mortimer returning, Constance proposed their walking through the rooms together, and, taking the arm of the handsome sailor, set off to make the attempt. But by this time the entrance to the longer room, through the folding doors that led to it, was completely blocked up, and her companion, sailor-like, and ever ready at resource, proposed that they should "try the other gangway." They accordingly placed themselves among the company still arriving by the stairs, and at length achieved an entrance to the principal room by the door which led from them.

Constance began to repent her enterprise, for to obtain a seat appeared impossible; but ere long she forgot that she wished for one, for she found herself in front of a group that completely rivetted her attention, though she beheld it only through an opening in the crowd which surrounded and concealed her. At the lower end of Mrs. Hartley's drawing-room were two ottomans, divided by a console. On the one farthest from the door sat the same lady whom she had formerly remarked at Lady Dort's, from the peculiar simplicity of her attire, from her being accompanied by a little girl that looked like a copy of herself in miniature, and from seeing Mortimer's having paid her very marked attention. Her dress was now precisely the same as she had seen it before—as before, the little miniature in white muslin sat beside her—as before, Henry Mortimer sat beside her on the other. Yet it is hardly correct to say she sat, for her position was infinitely more like lying, the back of her head resting on a cushion of the wide ottoman, while her feet were supported on a footstool which was placed at the greatest possible distance to which her feet could reach. Judging by the animation and evident amusement with which Mr. Mortimer listened to her, the vivacity of her conversation must have formed a striking contrast to the languor of her attitude. Neither of them appeared at all conscious of the crowd before them, or of the attention they excited; and though the lady spoke in some degree *sotte voce*, it was with such perfect distinctness that every word she uttered might have been heard by every one stationed at a moderate distance.

"For Heaven's sake tell me," said Mr. Mortimer, in reply to something which she had said before Constance had reached the spot where she now stood.

"No, Mortimer, no! I will not trust you," was the answer.

Her voice was deep and thrilling, and gave to everything she said an effect which the words alone, perhaps, would hardly convey.

"For Heaven's sake—for mercy's sake, tell me!" reiterated Mr. Mortimer.

"How dare I do it? Know I not that ere the iron hand of time has swung another hour away behind it, Mrs. Gardener Stewart will have it?"

Mr. Mortimer approached his lips very close to her ear and whis-

pered something which produced a slight smile. She shook her head as much as her strange position would permit her to do, but after the interval of a moment added, in the same tone of mock heroic solemnity, "Weil, then, as I live and breathe, I heard Lady Stephen say to Mrs. Hartley as you entered, 'Ah, the Bo-etian mist of ordinary life will now evaporate and disappear.'"

"Is it a Bæotian atmosphere, then, that we have breathed till now?" said my cousin Fitz, dwelling distinctly with his usual distressing good-nature on the diphthong that had so discomfited her erudition; upon which the little silly soul repeated Bæotian mist, Bæotian mist, Bæotian mist, with an air of such bitter distress, that had I the bowels of a Christian I could not tell it to you. But I have no bowels. Why am I the thing I hate?

'Non fu mai fatto giuoco cosi pazzo.'

Here am I, telling spiteful stories to you, who are as spiteful as a ferret, when I know that every ill-natured word I say will be sure to fly in my face, and scratch me when I go to bed."

She had raised her head a little as she uttered the last words, but replaced it, when she had said them, and then closed her eyes for several minutes. After this she again raised herself, drew her footstool towards her, and said, "Now I will be a little impertinent to these fine people who were so vastly fond of me at Naples. I can enjoy that sort of thing afterwards, even in the dark."

She now raised her eye-glass, and fixing it as steadily as she would have done a telescope if about to take an observation, began to reconnoitre a party who had just entered, and who were evidently looking at her.

It was very evident that Mr. Mortimer did not sympathize in the amusement which she had now chosen for herself. The persons she was thus unceremoniously examining were of high rank, and, moreover, gave excellent dinners, from which poets were not excluded. He therefore whispered what he intended should be a very sincere remonstrance in the ear, of which the only audible words were, "How can you?"

She looked at him as if she would have well liked to plague him a little longer, but the next moment dropped her glass and answered,

*"Ma che? S'un diavolo ha più valore,
E più forza di me, come possio,
Far resistenza a possanza maggiore.'"*

Again Mr. Mortimer approached his lips to her ear, and Constance turned away, vexed at having been led, almost unconsciously, to listen thus far.

"I want to find Penelope again," said she to her conductor—a hint which, as she probably knew, would inspire him with zeal sufficient to lead him skilfully through the crowd, and he performed the task so well, that they seemed to reach her as rapidly as if nothing had crossed their path to impede them.

Their passage, however, was not so rapid but that Mr. Fitzosborne, whom they met in the course of it, ventured to stop them for a

moment to pay his compliments to Constance, and afterwards to accompany her till she found her friend; nor did he leave her then, for, as Markham made an involuntary step forward to place himself by the side of Penelope, Fitzosborne seized the opportunity for gratifying a curiosity which had tormented him for some time past, by asking the name of that gentleman. His doing so suggested to the friendly heart of Constance the possibility of speaking of him to "one having interest at the Admiralty," as she well knew he deserved, and looking up into Fitzosborne's face with a slight augmentation of colour, which puzzled while it charmed him, she said, "I will tell you a great deal about him, Mr. Fitzosborne, if you will listen to me."

"If I will listen to you?" he replied, with a smile; "if that be the only condition necessary to my becoming acquainted with him, I shall soon be so—so far, at least, as knowing all that you may be pleased to tell me can make me." And so saying, he presented his arm and led her to a part of the room where several chairs were left unoccupied, from the attraction of a favourite song which was being sung in the other room.

"And now, my dear Miss Ridley, what is it you have got to tell me about that very handsome young friend of yours?" said he.

Constance, who though she did not lament her boldness, began to feel some little embarrassment as to the manner of opening the conversation to which it had led her, looked at him again with an eye that seemed to deprecate all severity of judgment upon what she was doing, and replied, "I want to tell you, Mr. Fitzosborne, that John Markham's good looks are his least merit. He is one of the noblest-hearted young men in the world, and the bravest. I am quite certain that if you knew him, his character would command your esteem."

Fitzosborne felt exceedingly puzzled to understand why the lovely Constance thus addressed him; but it was not in vain that he had so attentively, yet quietly, watched her conduct and manner through every scene in which he had met her. His judgment, deliberate as it generally was, had already gone far towards deciding that she was—in short, that whatever she said deserved to be listened to with attention, and therefore, with the very greatest attention he did listen for what she might say next, and when he found that she remained silent, he made an effort to continue the conversation himself by saying, "I feel disposed to give him my esteem even without knowing him, Miss Ridley, so well convinced do I feel that he would not possess yours without deserving it."

"That is very kindly said, Mr. Fitzosborne," replied Constance, whose embarrassment was by no means lessened by the pause which had enabled her to reflect a little upon the strange appearance which her conduct was likely to have in the eyes of her companion. "I am very much obliged to you for it; but yet," she added, rallying her courage, and remembering that the destiny of Penelope might hang upon her going well through the task she had undertaken; "but yet it will not satisfy me. I want your esteem for him to stand upon a firmer basis—I want you to esteem him for his own sake, and from your own knowledge of him."

"And how can I be fortunate enough to obtain that knowledge, Miss Ridley?" returned Fitzosborne.

"By inquiring among those who know him best—the officers of the ship in which he has served for years—the officers of the *Phoenix*."

It was no longer possible for Fitzosborne to mistake the object of Constance in thus addressing him, and perfectly incapable of affecting to do so, he replied with a frankness that immediately relieved her embarrassment, "You wish, Miss Ridley, that I should use my influence with my uncle for his promotion."

"I do indeed, Mr. Fitzosborne," said she, with a smile that seemed to thank him for having helped her forward to this decisive point of their discourse.

"Then you are quite right in bidding me make myself acquainted with his professional character, and I will not fail to do so. Have you known Mr. Markham long, Miss Ridley?" he added.

"As long as I have known myself, Mr. Fitzosborne," she replied eagerly, her spirits rising from the conviction that she had already obtained *something* by the effort she had made, and which had certainly cost her something, "and the longer and the better I know him, the stronger is my conviction of his worth."

Fitzosborne looked at the speaking features with a degree of admiration which few men but himself could have prevented from being legible on his own; but a sharper-sighted young lady than Constance in such matters might have met his eye, as she did now, without reading in it anything beyond an earnest and most respectful desire to comply with the wishes she was confiding to him.

Had Constance not been known to all the world to be affianced to Mr. Mortimer, Mr. Fitzosborne's feelings during this conversation might have been different in many respects; but as it was, he seized upon the opportunity of obliging her with unmixed pleasure, and replied to her warm attestation of her regard for Markham by saying, "May I ask you to introduce me to him?"

The heart of Constance leaped in her bosom for joy. "O, thank you, Mr. Fitzosborne!" she exclaimed; "that is precisely all I wished and wanted. He will be his own best advocate afterwards."

It is possible that Mr. Fitzosborne, in making this request, did not foresee the necessity of its being complied with instantly, and might have anticipated the continuance of his conversation with Constance, till the favoured and accepted lover, whose success seemed so strangely indifferent to him, should appear to reclaim the privilege of being listened to before all others; but if he did thus calculate he was disappointed, for Constance rose immediately.

"I shall not be at ease till I have done my old friend this good office," she said. "There he is, Mr. Fitzosborne. Let us go to him immediately."

Fitzosborne prepared to obey her, but said as he did so, "Do not make me appear intolerably rude to Miss Hartley. Do you not perceive that she is in earnest conversation with him?"

"O, never mind that just now. Penelope will forgive me," she replied with a smile that, little as she suspected it, put the observant

Fitzosborne pretty nearly as much *au fait* of the whole matter as if he had been formally made a confidant of it. Averse as Constance would have been to making any such disclosure, she could scarcely have lamented the having done it, could she have been aware of its effect. Were it solely from the well-authenticated fact that

“Fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,”

or from other feelings mixed with it, which it might be less easy to trace and define, it is certain that no sooner did Mr. Fitzosborne understand the real state of the case, than he determined to smooth the course of the true love he had discovered, to the utmost extent of his power.

The introduction which followed brought a bright flush to the face of Penelope, and caused her to bestow a look of such affectionate gratitude upon Constance, that had the preceding scene been attended with ten times more embarrassment she would have considered it as amply rewarded.

It is possible that the spirits of Constance were so cheered by the success of her efforts to bring these two gentlemen acquainted with each other, as to inspire the courage she had before wanted for making an inquiry which nothing but this want had so long delayed; for after they had chatted together for a minute or two upon such themes as usually suggest themselves when persons who have never met before are desirous to prove their inclination to meet again, she stopped them short by saying to Mr. Fitzosborne, “Can you tell me who that lady is who is sitting beside that little girl on the ottoman?”

“Conversing with Mr. Mortimer?” returned Fitzosborne, slightly looking at her.

“Yes,” succinctly replied Constance.

“I shall be very happy to tell you, and moreover to make you better acquainted with her than by merely mentioning her name,” he answered. “But will you allow me to ask you how it has happened that you do not know her already? That lady is my cousin, Mrs. Morley, and is an old acquaintance of Mrs. Hartley’s.”

“Half a dozen untoward accidents have been the cause of this,” said Penelope, eagerly. “The first time we called on Mrs. Morley when Constance was with us she was out; when that visit was returned, Miss Ridley was engaged in writing letters to Devonshire, and the day Mrs. Morley promised us the pleasure of her company at dinner she was too unwell to come. But ‘all is not lost that is delayed;’ let us immediately endeavour to make up for lost time by making you, Mr. Fitzosborne, our master of the ceremonies.”

“I will undertake the office most willingly,” he replied. “She has some few singularities that may startle you at first, but her noble qualities are more numerous as well as more important. Know her well, and you will like her much. Shall we go now?” he added, offering his arm to Constance.

Constance accepted his arm, but notwithstanding her curiosity to know something more of the lady who so evidently possessed the power of drawing Mortimer from her side, she liked not the idea of breaking in upon their *tête-à-tête*, and said, “Must we go directly?”

"Not if you wish to delay it, or to go in any other direction first," replied Fitzosborne, looking at her with something like surprise; but ere she could utter a word in reply, the thoughts that were passing in her mind seemed to have made their way into his, for he said to Penelope with sudden animation, "I assure you I shall like nothing better than the bringing you acquainted with my eccentric cousin, but I wish you would first let us pass into the music-room. There is, I perceive, a young professional debutante just going to sing, who, if I mistake not, is suffering, *really* suffering from shyness. If Mr. Markham and I give her a few bravos, it will be an act of charity, not to mention that she has really great merit, for I heard her sing not long ago at Naples before her vocation, poor young thing! was finally decided on. Do you consent?"

This question being addressed to Penelope, was answered by a ready acquiescence, and the *partie carrée* made their way towards the pianoforte. But to find seats was impossible. Mrs. Hartley, in her desire to be superlatively brilliant on this occasion, had really underrated her own influence and the attractions of her drawing-room, and, in her eagerness to secure the appearance of all the most literary and brilliant persons of her acquaintance, had collected together a greater number of people than her rooms could conveniently hold. But it rarely happens that any crowd, however painfully pressed together, can appear too densely packed to satisfy the unfriendly hospitality of the mistress of the house, and therefore, while nearly every one else looked half fainting, she still wore an aspect of enjoyment, and was in the very act of watching with the most perfect satisfaction the struggles of her friends for standing room, when Penelope and Constance, with the two gentlemen in attendance on them, reached the place where she stood.

"How small a crowd makes one's room look!" she exclaimed, addressing Mr. Fitzosborne. "You would not believe that these measured above forty feet across, would you? It is very extraordinary how some people's houses always get thronged the moment they open their doors. I am sure I don't know how those good folks manage who always seem to have as many chairs as guests. I wish they would let me into their secret. Now remember, Markham, you must not tell tales of me, and write an account to dear quiet little Appleby of my having collected about three hundred people around me at once."

Both gentlemen answered, as it was expected they would, by complimentary assurances that such a crowd must ever be delightful, that it was an enviable privilege to be permitted to make one in it, and the like; and in rejoinder Mrs. Hartley looked as handsome as it was well possible for a woman of five-and-forty to look, and smiled upon them both almost equally.

"By the way, Constance, what in the world have you done with Mortimer? Do not forget, dearest, that he has promised to read to us, and I shall look to you, my love, for selecting the moment when he will be most likely to keep his promise; *entre nous*, Mr. Fitzosborne, Mr. Mortimer, though a very handsome man, is in one respect exceedingly like a woman. Do I puzzle you?"

"You do, indeed," replied Fitzosborne, "and I entreat you to assuage the curiosity you have raised."

" ' He would be wooed, and not unsought be won, ' "

returned Mrs. Hartley laughing. "Pardon me, sweet Constance. I mean not in the usual sense of wooing. There he is willing enough to reverse the matter, and be himself the wooer. I speak but of his feelings as a poet. I have begged and implored for this promise, and as it was partly in your name, my fairest, I at length succeeded in obtaining it; but I confess I greatly fear that a little more wooing may still be necessary, and it is to you, my love, I look for it."

Constance shook her head.

"O you tyrant! you do not mean to refuse me, do you?"

"I really believe I do," returned Constance, smiling.

"And I really believe," replied Mrs. Hartley, looking grave, "that you are by no means so unkind as to mean what you say. You know not how many persons will be disappointed by it."

"Whatever Mr. Mortimer has promised, he doubtless will perform, if the promise was unconditional," said Markham, looking very much as if he thought his friend Constance right in not consenting to plead for the performance.

"You are an excellent officer, I have no doubt, my good Markham, on board; we have all heard a vast deal about that; but you must forgive me if I question your being quite *au fait* with the manœuvrings necessary to the management of a first-rate poet. A first-rate man-of-war is a trifle to it, my dear friend, so I must beg and entreat that you do not interfere to counteract my influence with *la belle fiancée* here, to obtain her assistance in the business," said Mrs. Hartley.

"Let me offer myself as a nuncio," said Fitzosborne, remarking the heightened colour of Constance. "We were just going where I think we shall find the gentleman in question. I hope, young ladies, you have not forgotten *your* promises respecting Mrs. Morley. Shall we seek her now?"

Glad to escape further importunity from Mrs. Hartley to do what she felt would be very particularly disagreeable to her, Constance readily expressed her acquiescence, and the quartette set off again in the same order as before.

In all large parties there is a high tide, which often seems to remain at its climax for no longer a pause than that of the ocean, retreating as soon as its extremest limit is reached. This receding moment now began to be perceptible in the rooms of Mrs. Hartley, and it was with less difficulty than they expected that the party who sought Mrs. Morley were permitted to approach her. She still occupied the same seat, but Mr. Mortimer was no longer beside her, his graceful figure being now conspicuous in earnest conversation with the Countess of M***, who, in point of rank, was the star of the evening.

Constance experienced something like a feeling of relief at finding that she was not going to interrupt the *tête-à-tête* she had witnessed, which she had alarmed herself by thinking would look exceedingly like a personal reclamation of her truant lover; the removal of this

fear restored her to her natural and graceful ease of manner, and she was much more able to do justice to the cordial wish she felt to make acquaintance with the cousin of Mr. Fitzosborne, than she would have been had Mortimer still remained beside her.

It was evidently, for some reason or other, the wish of Fitzosborne that Miss Ridley and his cousin should really become acquainted, and that the introduction should not pass over by his merely pronouncing their names within hearing of each other. He not only presented Constance to Mrs. Morley, but to her little girl too; and the manner in which this latter ceremonial was gone through on the part of Constance went far towards propitiating the favour of the mother.

"I am very glad to make acquaintance with you," said Constance, holding out her hand to the little girl, "because I want you to tell me how you like being in a room full of grown-up people, who do nothing to amuse you or themselves except walking about, and now and then saying a few words to each other?"

The child roused herself from her half-sleeping attitude with the air of being greatly delighted by a question that she seemed to think worth answering; she made room for Constance to sit down beside her on the ottoman, and then said, "I don't wonder at your thinking it must be very dull for me—and so it is. I do get so tired of looking at the ladies' fine gowns and the gentlemen's fine waistcoats. But then, you know, it is a great deal better to be dull with mamma than without her, for every now and then she takes my arm within hers, and gives it a little squeeze, and that is such a comfort! But, to be sure, you know, I had much rather be sitting with her all by my own self, as I used to do in the shady walks at Castellamare last summer."

"Miss Ridley," said Fitzosborne, "I shall be jealous if Mabel sets off full speed thus, chattering to you at your first interview just as fast as she does to me, who am about the oldest friend she has in the world."

"Yes, you are the oldest friend I have in the world, next mamma," replied the child, "and I love you next best, so you need not be jealous, cousin Fitz. But that is no reason, you know, why I should not like talking to such a pleasant-looking person as this, who does not begin by saying 'Dear me, what a pretty little girl!' I *am* so tired of hearing people say I am a pretty little girl."

Mrs. Morley looked at her, smiled languidly, and shook her head. "Though you are a pleasant-looking person, Miss Ridley, which in Mabel's vocabulary means kind, I fear that you will pass no lenient judgment on me for training my only treasure so very much in the way she should *not* go; but there are reasons for it, which shall be at your service, if you will, when we become better acquainted."

This speech from Mrs. Morley, and addressed to her insignificant self, astonished Constance beyond measure. Both during the present evening, and that on which she had met her at Lady Dort's, Constance had thought she had discerned, notwithstanding the marked simplicity of her dress, a something that seemed to hover between *hauteur* and impertinence in Mrs. Morley's manner of receiving the

compliments of many whom she had seen address her. She appeared to assume the airs of a personage, for some reason or other, apart from and above those around her, and the scraps of her conversation which she had overheard that night had confirmed the impression. But, notwithstanding her surprise, Constance received this unexpected exception in her favour very gracefully, and having felt very greatly interested by the appearance of Mrs. Morley, despite the shade of disapprobation which her peculiarities had produced, she immediately fell into easy and lively conversation with her, in which Penelope, Markham, and Fitzosborne joined.

But though the conversation was general, Mrs. Morley's manner to Constance was particular. It was to her she listened most eagerly, it was to her she addressed herself most frequently, and at length it suddenly occurred to the affianced bride of Mortimer, that it was her engagement to him, already become so marvellously public, which had obtained for her this flattering distinction.

Not many minutes, however, after this idea had suggested itself, she happened to move her head away towards Mabel, who still nestled closely at her side, and who had begun muttering something in her ear; and while thus engaged, she heard Mrs. Morley, in the low, clear whisper, that was so peculiar to her, say to Penelope, "Is it indeed true that your lovely friend is engaged to marry Henry Mortimer?"

"It is quite true," replied Penelope.

There was something in the tone in which this question was asked, which startled Constance greatly, more than the question itself, and, almost unconsciously, she turned round and looked at the speaker. The expressive countenance of Mrs. Morley was completely overcast; her fair pale brow was knit into a frown, and the dimples round her mouth had given place to a look profoundly melancholy.

"She loves him!" thought Constance, suddenly remembering the marked attention which Mr. Mortimer had shown her. "Alas! is it possible that he has given her reason to believe that *he* loves her?"

There was a complication of disagreeable feelings in this idea that made Constance first colour, and then turn pale. Pity for Mrs. Morley—pity and contempt too for herself, and a new-born but instantly full-grown wish that she had never met the captivating poet, to whom she had given her heart with such rash readiness, all pressed upon her, and made her feel exceedingly miserable.

Mr. Fitzosborne's eyes were fixed upon her, and it required the exertion of all his self-control, of which he certainly possessed more than an average share, to enable him to conceal the sensations produced by her evident emotion. Of her eventually discovering that Mortimer was not in any respect (save his power of versifying) the man she believed him to be, he had not the shadow of a doubt, and he trusted that the discovery would be made in time to save many from misery. But that it should have come already, exceeded his most sanguine hopes. Yet how else could he account for the look of misery that had taken possession of her features, upon hearing the question of Mrs. Morley, or the answer of Penelope?

There was, however, in the nature of Fitzosborne, no mixture of the

weakness which leads to premature judgment, or the receiving probabilities for facts. He became silent, but *not* abstracted, and watched every indication of feeling in the fair face of Constance, with an intensity of interest which was legible to the eye of Mrs. Morley, although equally unobserved and unsuspected by any one else.

No mixture of cold-hearted indifference respecting the welfare of the few whom she called her friends, made part of the whimsical eccentricity of Mrs. Morley's character. Mr. Fitzosborne ranked first among those whose friendship for herself and her child she believed to be unmixed with any selfish motive whatever, and the consequence was that she did

“ wear him
In her heart's core, ay, in her heart of hearts.”

Not, however, with any mixture of the feeling which for the most part has something to do, more or less, as the case may be, in all that has concern with the heart of a pretty woman at all on the sunny side of forty. Mrs. Morley was neither in love with Mr. Fitzosborne, nor did she believe that Mr. Fitzosborne was at all in love with her; nevertheless she was deeply, O deeply interested in all that concerned him, and almost tremblingly alive to every circumstance likely to affect his happiness. It had more than once happened that Mr. Fitzosborne had mentioned Constance Ridley to her as a young person in whom he thought she would find it difficult to trace the *minauderies* of which she was wont to complain in most of the young females of her acquaintance, and that unerring tact which prevents most feminine ears from hearing a young man name a young woman, without detecting the nature of the sentiment she has inspired, through all the varieties of admiration, esteem, love, distrust, contempt, and dislike, had taught her to believe, that despite the seemingly limited extent of this negative praise, her friend and kinsman had at length seen a woman whom he was likely to love.

She had, however, subsequently heard, in common with all the world, that this admired Miss Ridley had both captivated and accepted the fastidious Mortimer, and the vision of Fitzosborne's having found a wife vanished from her thoughts. But upon seeing and conversing with Constance, she not only admired her as much as her cousin hoped and expected she would do, but conceived so very strong a wish that Mr. Fitzosborne should, and that Mr. Mortimer should not, become her husband, that her own happiness suddenly seemed to hang upon this seemingly improbable change of scenery and decorations.

No wonder, then, that the speaking features of Mrs. Morley puzzled Constance, and set her, in her turn, upon weaving imaginary romances, which made her almost forget the place where she was, and the scene that surrounded her. All this intricate and visionary network, however, was speedily disturbed by the approach of the poet, who unconsciously had so large a share in its construction. Henry Mortimer, as usual, had been receiving the flattering homage of nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles, from all the most distinguished persons in the room, and, as usual, he had so far yielded himself to

their gentle fascination, as to think it was no offence to love, though he postponed for a while breathing his adoration into the ear of her who had bound herself to listen to no other. But at length, either satiated by the homage he had received, or stimulated by seeing the admired Fitzosborne at her side, he once again pressed forward to claim the place which was now his by right.

"Come into the music-room," said he, addressing Constance, and offering his arm with at least as much authority as tenderness. Constance at that moment felt so much pity for Mrs. Morley, that she would have willingly endured the absence of her lover for a while longer, rather than have inflicted the pain which she believed her to feel; but all her conjectures were put to flight, and all her fanciful suspicions immediately cured, by the manner in which that lady now took the arm of Fitzosborne, and the tone in which she said, "Come, dear friend!—*Je m'embâte ici, nous nous embâteons, n'est pas ?*—might we not conjugate the verb throughout?" while, on the other hand, Mrs. Morley herself felt disposed to give up her own theory as utterly unfounded, upon hearing Fitzosborne address the party in the gayest and most unembarrassed manner possible, as he delivered the petition of Mrs. Hartley, and supported it by the most flattering pleading possible from himself. Mortimer looked at Constance. He was far, very far from having forgotten the promise he had given; not even Mrs. Hartley herself remembered it more freshly; but he either saw, or fancied he saw, in the aspect of his lady-love a something which he would himself have found it extremely difficult to name, and which, indeed, could hardly be described fitly, except by negatives. She did not look agitated, blushing, and eager at the prospect of the pleasure he had given her reason to hope for. She did not even look animated as Mr. Fitzosborne proceeded to describe Mrs. Hartley's anxiety upon the subject; neither did she look a look, or say a word, that might indicate to the watchful, scrutinizing lover, a portion of the emotion which he felt certain she must feel, at the idea of witnessing every eye fixed in admiration on the man she loved.

"The young rustic is too proud to show her feelings!" thought he—not for an instant did he conceive it possible that she did not experience the emotions he ascribed to her. "Such pride may show well, and gracefully, when addressed to others, but to me!—no!—It must not be that the woman I have at once rendered by my notice the admiration of one half of the town, and the envy of the other, should appear the only one who can contemplate the idea of hearing me read my own verses aloud, with indifference!" and thus reasoning, he looked away from her, and replied to Mr. Fitzosborne's entreaties by saying lightly—"Not to-night, Mr. Fitzosborne!—I must entreat you to tell Mrs. Hartley that it is absolutely impossible."

Though he had turned his head from Constance as he said this, he turned it again, lover-like, to see how she bore it, and to his extreme surprise perceived, beyond all possibility of mistake, that she was exceedingly well pleased to hear it. Nor did he in this in any degree mistake her. Constance felt deeply, too deeply sometimes, on many subjects; but, like all persons in whom strong feeling is genuine, and not affected, she hated display; and though to have heard

the voice of Mortimer give breath to any of the admired compositions she had so lately received from him, would have given a delight of the very highest kind, could she have listened to it alone, or with her friend Penelope only to share the joy, the idea of being *one* in the crowd before whom he was invited to display himself was anything rather than agreeable to her.

"Absolutely impossible?" repeated Fitzosborne, gravely. "Do not say so, Mr. Mortimer! you are not aware of the pain you will give by this disappointment. I wish you had seen the group of lovely heads that were congregated together listening to Mrs. Hartley, while she spoke of her hope that you would read, as if waiting for their fate. It is impossible you could have resisted the eloquent silence of such pleading."

"I should certainly be very averse to giving pain instead of pleasure, if I could help it," replied Mortimer softening; "but it would be an immense relief to escape it. I wish you would send somebody to tell Mrs. Hartley that it is impossible I should be the first in this business. Will you have the pitying kindness to find such a messenger, Mr. Fitzosborne?"

"I will be the messenger myself," replied Mr. Fitzosborne, "if you will permit me to add that you are willing to be the second reader, if she will find a first."

"Willing!—O no! you must not say that, if you value your veracity. For if I do this thing, it will be most unwillingly."

"I grieve to hear it! but if not willing, may I say you are ready?" returned Fitzosborne.

"Alas!—Yes! I am doomed, and clearly see that struggling will be in vain."

With these credentials Mr. Fitzosborne departed, returning again immediately with the assurance that Mrs. Hartley would find some one to read, "*if she knelt for it.*" Mr. Mortimer smiled languidly, and replied, "She will find no great difficulty. Few men, I believe, are constituted like myself. In many others such a task might appear rather agreeable than otherwise; but to me it is detestable!"

Ere many more words had been bandied among the little party now assembled before the ottoman of Mrs. Morley, who by some means or other had the art of ever making a sort of throne of the seat she selected, inducing most of the men and some few of the women of her acquaintance to linger near her, whenever they approached, and happened not to find her too deeply occupied in *tête-à-tête* discussion to permit interruption—ere many more sentences had been exchanged among the persons now round her, Caroline Hartley approached them with a very busy and important air.

"Come all of you this moment, good people!" she exclaimed, taking hold of the arm of Constance, in order to enforce her leading the detachment in the direction she wished them to take. "Mamma begs and entreats that you will all come directly, particularly Mr. Mortimer, to hear something very delightful. You *will* come, Mr. Mortimer, won't you?"

"I am under orders, Miss Caroline Hartley," he replied, placing himself on the other side of Constance, and securing her arm. "Go on—I'll follow you."

Mrs. Morley, Mr. Fitzosborne, and Mabel followed, and Penelope and Markham brought up the rear. On reaching the oval-windowed termination of the second drawing room, they found Mrs. Hartley in a state of extreme energy, with two footmen attending her orders, about a dozen of peculiarly-intellectual persons round her, who appeared waiting for the result of their operations; and a tall and somewhat red-faced individual standing apart, with two or three small volumes in his hand, watching what was going on with very evident interest, but with an expression of countenance which hovered between the affectation of *haut-ton* indifference and poetical sublimity.

Soon after the arrival of Mrs. Morley and her cortège, the business upon which Mrs. Hartley was engaged appeared to be complete; the tall red-faced gentleman deposited his books upon a small table that had been conveyed to the spot for his service, and then seated himself behind it, so as to face the company, who on their side had the advantage of beholding his substantial features with very satisfactory distinctness, by the aid of a pair of wax-lights, attentively placed, one on each side of him.

"Gracious Heaven, what a bore!" whispered Mortimer to Constance. "Is it possible, dearest, that your friend Mrs. Hartley can be going to inflict an auto-rythmos from *him* upon us? Do you know him?"

"No, indeed, I do not," replied Constance. "Who is he?"

"He calls himself, I am told, 'The Sigh, and the Smile,' but among ordinary mortals he is known as Mister Wilmot of New York," returned Mortimer.

"Alas for my ignorance!" exclaimed Constance. "I am not at all wiser now—I know him not."

"Your state is the more gracious—it is a vice to know him," whispered Mortimer; "and a vice, too, that brings a pretty severe punishment with it, to those, at least, who love not to be hung alive in chains upon a gallows, vibrating across the Atlantic, for the moral edification of the new-born race on one side, and the meet record of exceeding folly on the other. But hist! Take the chair that has been placed for you, my fairest! and I will endeavour to forget the misery preparing for me, by looking at you."

Constance obeyed. As many persons as could find either sitting or standing room had already pressed forward to make part of Mr. Wilmot's audience, and that most singularly-favoured gentleman, after looking round him with a vast deal of conscious dignity, trimming first one, and then the other of the wax-lights by passing the point of his pen-knife through the wicks, began the business for which he was placed in the conspicuous situation accorded to him, by opening the largest of the volumes he held.

He cleared his voice, as many men on both sides the Atlantic do clear that organ, unseemly though the process be, and having done so, began as follows.

"*My* audience must not take it ill on *my* part, if I in some degree *devi-ate* from the mode and *prac-tice* established upon these very delightful literary occasions, for the purpose of giving *my* support and *testimo-ny*, *my* vote and interest, as I may call it, to the handsomest

picture as ever yet has been made of *my* nation in the article of style and high fashion, which is the point (I am not going to deny it) upon which, one and all, we feel the most share of that noble ambition which is bringing us up so unaccountable high in the scale of universal humanity."

Having uttered these prefatory remarks, Mr. Wilmot raised to a level with his eyes the volume, labelled as the property of Mr. Hookham, and read as follows.

"She—(it is the heroine of whom the author speaks)—she had been accustomed to see her father and John Effingham moving in the best circles of Europe, respected for their information and independence—undistinguished by their manners—admired for their personal appearance—many, courteous, and of noble bearing, AND principles, if not set apart from the rest of mankind by an arbitrary rule connected with rank—rich, and possessing all the habits that properly mark refinement—of gentle extraction, of liberal attainments—walking abroad in the dignity of mankind, AND WITH NONE BETWEEN THEM AND THE DEITY."

Having concluded this exquisite paragraph, Mr. Wilmot closed Mr. Hookham's volume, and looked round him with an air of ineffable satisfaction, and an aspect that seemed to challenge the world in arms to disprove a single circumstance of the evidence which he had brought forward in proof of his own superiority, and that of all his countrymen (of the same colour).

"Does not your author appear to forget, Mr. Wilmot, a certain passage, descriptive of man, which has hitherto been held to be of some authority—that, I mean, in which he is said to be 'a little lower than the angels?'" demanded Mr. Fitzosborne with a smile.

"Sir?" responded Mr. Wilmot, with a look of unmitigated contempt.

"Your friend, whoever he may be—for I profess not to recognise his style, appears to assign a higher place in creation to the gentlemen of whom he speaks, than the authority I have quoted accords to the rest of the human race. May I ask of whom your author speaks, when he says 'there is nothing between them and the Deity?'"

"Of gentlemen of the United States, sir," responded Mr. Wilmot with becoming dignity.

Mr. Fitzosborne replied by a silent bow to this piece of information, which bow seemed perfectly to satisfy Mr. Wilmot, who, on closing the printed labours of his friend and countryman, opened a little pocket volume filled with manuscripts of his own.

The lines he read were, as usual, about stars, and harps, and tears, and violet-flowers, and no less than eleven middle-aged but very talented girls, who had made way for their persons, or at least for some part of them, within the circle which surrounded the reader, all declared that there was something in Mr. Wilmot's verses, though they could not exactly say what, which went more directly to the heart than those of any other poet they had ever happened to meet with.

"Would you wish me, Constance, to sit down, for the purpose of enchanting Mrs. Hartley's blue ladies after this?" demanded Mortimer in a whisper.

"No," replied Constance very gently, but very distinctly too.

So Mrs. Hartley's *soirée* was obliged to fade and die away, without the *eclat* of Mr. Mortimer's reading. Nevertheless it was voted by very nearly everybody to have been a most delightful evening; and on the whole, Mrs. Hartley retired to rest extremely well contented with her *soirée*, herself, Mr. Marsh, and May Fair.

EVENING REPOSE.

THE herds are still browsing the hills along,
The birds with each other are vying in song,
Exulting the reaper's heart glows;
But soon comes the Evening—so silent yet bright,
In her train the still and the beautiful Night,
And she sheds over Nature repose—
Repose—Repose,
A sweet and refreshing repose!

The glaciers reflect the Evening's red,
And the valleys are wrapped in their cloudy bed,
And the leaves of the flowers now close;
From alp to alp the glad horns resound,
And the herds descend with joyous bound
To the shadowy vale for repose—
Repose—Repose,
A sweet and refreshing repose!

And the stars they have mounted their thrones to run
The course prescribed them since time begun,
And they smile upon friends and foes;
And the elves dance around in the moon's pale light,
On the velvet turf—so airy—so bright—
Before they sink to repose—
Repose—Repose,
A sweet and refreshing repose!

N. J. LUCAS.

TALES OF THE PUMP ROOM.

INTRODUCTION.

INDEBTED as are the public generally, and the class of invalids especially, to those works by Dr. Granville, the first of which has swelled by hundreds the pilgrims to those privileged founts of Hygeia, the "Spas of Germany," while the more recent and national one exhibits a chivalrous desire to break a lance in favour of the salubrious nymphs of our native England, I am not sure that for myself individually I owe the energetic author aught save a grudge, for the revival, by his latter publication, of the feelings (best gathered from their actual perusal) under which the following unflattering "pencilings by the spring" were originally drawn forth; or that these will be counteracted, as they in some degree are to myself, in the eyes of a fastidious public, by the strange and therefore veracious narratives to which the joint subjection of four hapless human beings to the characteristic national *peine forte et dure* of the "Pump" gave rise.

Should the fiend thus evoked prove too potent for the spells by which in our own case his exorcism was effected, the responsibility must be transferred to, or at least shared by, the worthy practitioner, who, by conjuring up (though, be it *distinctly understood*, by no actual mention of any individual "Spa" among the minor English haunts of health, if not of pleasure, enumerated in his work) the reminiscences associated with the following tales, has their resuscitation and infliction on the world upon his shoulders.

And now, having already premised (what the experience of all who have lived long in the world will corroborate) that their character of "true stories" is only rendered more credible by their apparent incredibility, I have only, preparatory to telling "the tales as they were told to me," to throw as nearly as possible, by the previous soporific influences of the scene, the reader into my own position of a passive at least, if not pleased and thankful listener; assuring him for his comfort, that if ever directed in quest of health by Dr. Granville, or doctor anybody, to even the least attractive among the infant "Spas of England," it will not be to the precise one where I shiveringly indited, what I yet shiver to look back on, the following description.

Reader! are you at a loss for a precise idea of the import of the word "*Ennui*?"—one originating, by the way, with the people on earth least capable of fathoming its frightful intensity of meaning? If so, I am prepared to furnish you with a definition. *Ennui* (in England at least) signifies being sent by one's physician, in a state of health not positively bad enough to alarm oneself, yet negatively enough so to alarm others, to some newly-discovered, half-savage, half-civilized embryo of a fifth or sixth rate watering-place, looking, notwithstanding its hopeless distance from town, *par excellence*, and

all other towns worth mentioning, like Paddington and Pentonville, just unpacked, a little damaged, from one of Pickford's vans.

You have its buildings already in your mind's eye ; (I wish they would go out of mine ;) and now for its moral and physical recommendations. Social as Juan Fernandez—select as New South Wales—picturesque as Pevensea Level—shady as the Deserts of Sahara—in facility of access almost rivalling Ascension—in civilization and culture not far behind St. Kilda. Rural as mud, mire, and monotony can make it, and sublime in solitude as Salisbury Plain.

Reader ! this is no fabulous paradise. This *rus in urbe* actually exists in the terra incognita of one of our less-known counties, and its chief ornament is, or rather, alas ! I should sadly say, was, a stately Pump-room, which, if it did not exactly, like Milton's Pandemonium, "rise as an exhalation to the sound of flutes and soft recorders," had about it as little of the vulgar tangible realities of a terrestrial building, and was erected with as little din of chisel and mallet as was consistent with a structure, whose chief component parts were painted wood and tarnished paper.

It was very imposing, nevertheless ; and being as yet a "world too wide" for its devoted victims, it contained, beside the usual scullery-looking fountain, with its gas-like apparatus of pipes and cocks, and its ominous array of tall taper tumblers—(not to mention a priestess, whose nose constant efforts to escape the effluvia had fairly curled back upon itself, like the tail of Lady Penelope Penfeather's pug)—the noble, but, it must be confessed, as yet "marrowless" skeleton of the Borewell subscription library ; consisting, as far as I could gather from daily but not very close inspection of Reece's Medical Guide, a Chemical Analysis of the Borewell Mineral Waters, Hervey's Meditations, Young's Night Thoughts, and Sherlock on Death. The Letters of Smelfungus, Diary of an Invalid, ditto of an *Ennuyéé*, and the Transactions of the Agricultural and Philosophical Society of Borewell, handsomely presented by themselves. These, with a few dog's-eared romances from the Minerva press, and sundry odd volumes (grievously thumbed) of the Waverley Novels, composed, to the best of my recollection, the *catalogue raisonné* of the literary resources of the Borewell Spa.

For the more active equestrian exercises so conducive to health or convalescence, its facilities consisted in divers deeply-rutted lanes, well calculated for sober motion, and indeed precluding every other ; together with some couple of miles of furzy common, (the relics of an exploded rabbit-warren,) with pitfalls frequent enough to arouse the faculties of the most lethargic or comatose patient ; not to mention the chances of dislocation or fracture, so favourable to the rising reputation of the Borewell surgical practitioner. For pedestrians there were the delightful alternatives of a quarter of a mile of newly-macadamized street, whose adaptation to the cases of his gouty and rheumatic patients Dr. Paradox failed not to point out ; of narrow pathways through rank and dripping corn-fields, intersected at every hundred yards by stiles of formidable obliquity ; and last, not least, a public garden of such respectable growth and maturity, that gentlemen were prohibited from entering it with spurs, lest they should

root up the bushes, or ladies with flounces, for fear of decapitating the trees.

With these manifold resources within and without doors, during the wettest part of the wet summer of 18—, it will surprise no one to hear that towards the end of my second week's solitary sojourn I meditated suicide. I had strolled out about half a mile on the London road, for privacy, (it being the least frequented in the parish,) and in quest of a tree capable of sustaining the weight of myself and my miseries, when the sight, the welcome, unexpected sight, of a smart tilbury, with two gentlemen in it, and a mounted servant behind, induced me to suspend, not myself, but my resolution. Touching my hat, with all the remaining alacrity I could muster, to my fellow-martyrs, I gladly turned in their wake, inhaling with absolute delight the cloud of dust created by their unwonted vehicle.

I felt sure of meeting them at dinner; for the public table, at which I had hitherto sat, like Alexander Selkirk,

“Sole monarch of all I surveyed,”

afforded, I knew, the only gastronomical resource of Borewell; nor was its well-nigh despairing hostess (the presiding nymph before mentioned of the spring) likely to allow such distinguished visitors to elude her hospitality.

On entering accordingly, more punctually than usual, the chilly ill-finished *salle à manger*, where fumes from the adjoining kitchen strove but half successfully with vault-like exhalations from the still weeping mortar of the walls, the exhilarating spectacle of three covers realized my sanguine expectations. On two of these welcome plates reposed (a custom borrowed from places of greater resort) a pair of visiting cards, and I read with pleasure the promising titles of Mr. Malcolm of Malcolm's Tower, and Col. Mertoun of his Majesty — Dragoons.

The individuals thus respectably designated soon entered, and confirmed my favourable prognostics. Never was the civil and military character more happily relieved and contrasted than in this pair of friends. Mr. Malcolm was a tall fair man, whose features might almost have been deemed feminine, but for the hardier tint of his complexion, derived evidently from merely exercise in the open air. “Country gentleman” was written in every line of his open agreeable countenance; yet that such had not been always his vocation, there was something in the flash of his bright blue eye that seemed to testify, and it was less of a surprise than might have been expected, when he ascribed the complaint (obstinate chronic rheumatism) for which he was doomed to his present penance, to literal, not figurative acquaintanceship with the “frosty Caucasus,” and exposure during more than one adventurous journey to the precarious shelter of a Turcoman tent. To the pursuits of fishing and farming, so congenial to a returned Scotsman, he had now, however, been for some years devoted; and though regretting his forced absence from these, and from a family whom he loved too well to involve them in the discomforts of Borewell, there was about the worthy borderer a cheerful *bon-*

hommie which bespoke one determined to make the best of existing circumstances, both to himself and his companions in exile.

Colonel Mertoun, again, was a thorough soldier—just the fine martial-looking veteran, bronzed by a thousand climates—of whom the late eventful wars have left us so many a noble specimen. His temperament was evidently less elastic than that of the plain unruffled laird. A man cannot have seen and suffered what soldiers of the last half century have done, without either rising, with true mess-room buoyancy, above the scenes and vicissitudes in which he has been a partaker, or bearing about with him, like the subdued and contemplative Mertoun, a countenance somewhat “sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought.”

I pique myself on being a little of a physiognomist, and saw that disappointment—a blight of the heart and affections in early life—had done more than camps and carnage to make Mertoun the pensive but not morose solitary he evidently had remained. There is, however, as Jaques says, “much matter” in your retired soldier, as well as in abdicated princes, and further acquaintance proved that in anecdote and adventure our invalid could match with many a more stirring soldado. A gouty affection of a teasing undecided character had fallen, as it frequently does, into a wounded limb, and to try to dislodge it he had accompanied his friend Malcolm to Borewell.

Our trio—but I am forgetting that all this time, dear reader, *you* may be wondering who the devil *I*, that thus familiarly address you, am—and I must really put you out of pain by a schedule of my real and personal properties. Imprimis, an old name, that of St. Leger, a tolerable estate, a fair wife, and five children, constitute my exterior appendages. With such inducements to keep within bounds my insatiable thirst for travel, you will probably be disposed to view in the light of poetical justice the penance by which I was now doomed to expiate, with slight chance of their removal, the consequence of boyish daring in a ramble among the Alps.

A-propos of travel. It is seldom that four individuals (for another member was ere long sent by his evil and our good stars to complete our *partie quarrée*) are assembled by chance in one miniature traveller’s club, as representatives of nearly the four points of the compass. The east had been, as I have hinted, the chief scene of Malcolm’s adventures—for adventures they indeed might really be called—while the West Indies and Peninsula occupied the foreground of Colonel Mertoun’s military reminiscences. My travels, again, had been chiefly pursued in the southern countries of Europe and Switzerland; while the less voluntary locomotion of Mr. Curzon (an *attaché* from the foreign office, the fourth arrival to whom I have alluded) had been restrained within the limits of the few minor northern courts to which his standing yet permitted him to aspire.

That this divergence in our distinctions produced an agreeable variety in our after-dinner talk, it will not be difficult to imagine. Yet it did not prevent our hailing, in the double capacity of a fresh listener to ours, and delightful though chary narrator of his own specimens, the *beau idéal* of a Protestant clergyman from Ireland; reconciled to the pleasure of revisiting, after long years of exile and seclusion, his

native England, to the sadly crippled condition to which the damp climate of his adopted country's western coasts had reduced him. Mr. Travers indeed suited us all—harmonizing specially in some point or other of his interesting character with every one of the group. Having in his youth made the grand tour (as tours were then made) with a young British nobleman, he was familiar with the courts, whose gossip formed the stock in trade of the young *attaché*; and if long rural retirement had qualified him to talk of farming and horticulture with the good-natured Malcolm, acquaintance thorough, not superficial, with the classics, made me prick up my ears whenever he spoke of Italy, while a melancholy, deep, philosophical, and gentle, associated him in heart and feeling with the sensitive Mortimer.

But enough of us, and our personal qualities. It is our stories with which you, dear reader, have to do; and how these ever came to see the light (a proper bonfire it was!) it is time I should make you aware.

Every watering-place, it is well known, has its doctor, (alias dictator,) from the renowned and omnipotent J— of L—, to the obscure and as yet fameless Paradox of Borewell. It was the decree of the latter, infallible as those of the Medes and Persians, that at the end of a month's course of the waters, patients should intermit their cure, and they then enjoyed the liberty (a dangerous one I should opine in many cases for the Spa) of varying, by a short excursion in the vicinity, the monotony of their Hygeian *séjour*.

This permission three members of our fraternity (the *attaché* was obliged to devote *his* holiday to a run up to town) had not virtue to resist; though the helpless condition of poor Malcolm, now immovably chained to the spot by the debility which had succeeded his ejected pains, might have prompted to self-immolation, for his sake, any but residents of a month's standing at Borewell. We quieted our consciences, however, and consoled our friend by the prospect of the accession of ideas with which our little trip would enrich our remaining durance; and set off, exhilarated like any school-boys on the eve of the holidays, on our week's ramble. Malcolm, with his usual good-nature, bade us never mind him, as he had in view, during our absence, a resource to which nothing short of such a salutary extremity could have driven him.

On this oracular response we pondered at intervals during our excursion; at the end of which our speculations were set at rest by seeing, on entering the Pump-room, our greatly recruited friend seated in his wonted arm-chair at the round library table, (our habitual lounge,) with a reasonably thick quire of paper before him, most of it scribbled over in a fair but somewhat feminine hand.

"You are already aware," answered he to our simultaneous ejaculations on this unexpected discovery of authorship, "that I have been a wanderer in Wallachia; and in one of my brief sojourns in its then barbarous, but they tell me now fast humanizing capital, there occurred an incident so romantic in itself, and fraught with such tragic consequences to one of the loveliest creatures whom fate ever sent to waste her sweetness in a Slavonian swamp, that I have been bothered, ever since I can remember, by my wife and girls to put it on paper for

them ; the journal in which I had noted it down at the time (for to keeping one, I fear, I must not, in the face of printed evidence, refuse to plead guilty) having gone to choke the fishes, if fish there be in one of their slow muddy sluggish streams, about as like my native Tweed as the black bog they issue from to the green braes of Yarrow. The task, thanks to this Bastille of ours, is nearly concluded, and I can't say it has, on the whole, been a disagreeable one, so many are the scenes it has revived and made flit before me. I really can hardly persuade myself you have been a week gone."

"You'll lend us this tempting-looking MS. after dinner, won't you?" said Mertoun, in his most insinuating manner, to his friend.

"I'll see you hanged first," replied Malcolm, in a tone strangely at variance with the threat, "unless you all equally commit yourselves by a similar piece of folly. I don't insist on your writing your *own* stories. Some of you, God bless you! have perhaps, like the king's grinder, 'none to tell;' and others would require a folio. But some choice bit of sentiment or adventure, stumbled on in your path through life, I insist on, if ever you are to know one word of the Moldavian mystery (worth knowing, perhaps, as times go, though I say it that should not) contained in that bunch of well-blotted foolscap."

This playful proposal was met, of course, with all the variety of negatives which laziness, modesty, or incapacity could suggest. But there are sons as well as daughters of Eve inheriting her propensities; and curiosity finally triumphed; a conquest much accelerated by a course of almost tropical rains, and the determination of Malcolm to starve us into compliance, by an absolute refusal to talk, and silent devotion to his own unfinished MS.

Round the Pump-room table there did we all at last congregate, pen in hand, during some three or four dreary diluvial days; inditing what you, dear reader, are now to peruse, but which never would have met your eye, but for a consummation equally unexpected and undesired.

Among the qualities incident to one of our party (from delicacy and compassion I abstain from saying which) was incurable absence. Remaining one night late in the Pump-room to put the finishing stroke to his MS., he forgot, in the exultation of success, to put the extinguisher on the candles. Before daybreak all was confusion and consternation in Borewell. Flames illumined its wooden walls, and threatened destruction to its pasteboard palaces. Engines could not reach it in half a century—water, though a staple and a drug, was inaccessible save in tumblers—and the Pump-room, the glory of the infant commonwealth, lay ere long a heap of smouldering ashes!

I shall not soon forget the face of its owner, as in the triply outraged capacity of proprietor, hotel-keeper, and librarian, he stood at dead of night, bewailing, like Othello, his tarnished fame, and "occupation gone!"

"Come, come, friend," said the easy-tempered, easy-circumstanced Malcolm, "there's nothing for your case but a subscription. We have done the mischief, and it is fair we should pay for it. Here goes my name for 50*l.* or 100*l.* if you require it." "And mine," "And mine," said three of us, according to our several ability; while

the chief culprit seemed tacitly to consider himself liable for whatever should prove deficient in the amount.

"I'm insured for a trifle, gentlemen," said the landlord, revived by such unwonted liberality, "and your honours' goodness will go far. But," eyeing with a professional glance the pile of MS. lying unheeded on Malcolm's table, "if you would just please to throw in them papers that did the mischief, I'd engage the printing of them would make a man of me again. There's a great call for gentlefolks' writings now-a-days; the place, at any rate, would be known and talked about—and 'twould be droll if what burnt should rebuild the Pump-room!"

"Well, well!" said Malcolm, with his wonted ease, "I don't care for my part, if the rest are agreeable. Though there's treason in my history, 'tis none of my own committing; and you, gentlemen, have too little concern in yours to feel sore on the matter. Here, friend," (tying up the MS. and writing on the huge envelope,) "I'll throw you a title into the bargain, 'TALES OF THE PUMP-ROOM.'"

No. I.

THE CLERGYMAN'S STORY.

I KNOW not how to convey to those acquainted alone with the security, the almost holy tranquillity of the *home* feelings of our happy England, an idea of the utter desolateness, heightened by a sense of hourly and invisible dangers, of a Protestant pastor's solitary fireside in the wilds of Ireland, in the year 18—. Nothing save a trust in Providence, unfaltering as a higher power could alone inspire, could have enabled a lone invalid, of weak health and uncertain spirits, to endure, during the long nights of their fearful winter, the consciousness of being the mark for the rancorous hostility of a rabid rival sect, and the too easily excitable violence of their reckless satellites.

In the exercise of commanded duty, however, the soldier of the Gospel must ever feel adequately strengthened; and to visit the sick, or comfort the dying of my small and straggling flock—even under cloud of night, when murder stalked abroad beneath forms of peculiar atrocity—seemed light in comparison with sitting powerless at a lowly hearth, awaiting the sudden crash of the stone or whiz of the bullet from the single assassin, or the fierce shout and savage burst of numbers too overwhelming for resistance, into the undefended parsonage.

One only cause of thankfulness, then, mitigated to myself the horrors of those interminable evenings—the thought that to none dearer was life embittered by those undefined expectations of evil; that no agonized wife or shrieking daughter would throw herself in vain between beings maddened into frenzy, and the destined object of others' vengeance, or be haunted to a premature grave by visions of deeds too hellish for cannibal ferocity. If I perished, it would be alone, and unmourned; except by distant loved ones, estrangement from whom had hitherto formed the melancholy drawback on my Irish preference.

Transplanted from a curacy in my native England, in the suite of a bishop with whom I was connected—not all the promises of further advancement opened to me by his friendly patronage had altogether reconciled me (even in less troublesome times) to my narrow sphere of almost nominal duties, and the isolation it involved from all that can endear life to social and civilized man.

To the latter evil an alleviation seemed to be held out by the settlement, in a not very distant parish, of another English incumbent, a man, too, of birth and family; even more likely than myself to seek solace under banishment from congenial intercourse. But the exile from his native land and high connexions, which Lascelles rather resented than deplored—was occasioned (as I soon learned) by his own pride and impracticability; if not by features in his early career too decidedly unclerical to be smoothed over nearer home. While rustication in a remote parish of the south-west of Ireland was held out to him as a temporary measure, to lead in due time to a provision in the sister church more consonant to the ambitious views with which alone, alas! he had entered it—the proud spirit of the scion of nobility had submitted, as best it might, to the consequences of his own indiscretion. But when years rolled on, and being “out of sight” of his powerful friends led to its proverbial result of being “out of mind” also—disappointment, acting on a character naturally harsh and gloomy, would have subsided into utter moroseness, but for an incident so romantic in its nature and effects, as to soften and turn for a time into a new channel the current of his chafed and perturbed feelings.

Some twenty years before the ominous one I have been alluding to, (and my unsocial neighbour was my senior by nearly that period,) the monotony of his existence in his still wilder maritime parish had been invaded, not by a simple shipwreck—that, alas! was matter of frequent occurrence on a rude and dangerous coast—but the total loss (with one sole and interesting exception) of everything animate and inanimate on board a large and richly freighted West Indiaman.

Driven out of their course for Bristol by a gale of unprecedented fury, a whole convoy of homeward-bound transports and merchant vessels struck on a reef of sunken rocks, stretching out from the coast off W——; one transport, with two hundred men and officers on board, sinking within fifty yards of the shore, whence assistance was unhappily impracticable; while, alas for the honour of humanity! of the few still breathing bodies cast up on the beach, some were suffered to be swept out again, in the hellish anxiety for plunder which pervaded the wild population of a half savage district. One officer, happily rescued by the exertions of Mr. Lascelles, was thus deliberately abandoned by a miscreant, to grasp in his stead a chest which promised to be valuable.

Three vessels thus went to pieces in an hour, within a couple of miles of each other. Out of one, only three lives were saved; out of another, ten; but from the third, the merchantman, which, deeply laden, had struck most heavily, one human being alone, and that a delicate young female, was most singularly preserved. This poor girl, a returning planter's daughter of about fifteen, was in bed, like the

other women on board, when the ship struck and went to pieces, but was miraculously carried through a porthole, and thrown on shore, in her night-dress, grievously bruised. She too had been again swept out by the reeling waves, and must have infallibly perished, had not Lascelles, already half exhausted by his exertions in rescuing the officer, dashed gallantly once more into the foaming billows, and brought out, with no small difficulty, his insensible prize. She was conveyed to the shelter of the nearest hovel, where insensibility being succeeded by fever and delirium, the poor young creature long hovered between death and life; returning recollection only serving to add to her bodily sufferings the acutest distress from her forlorn and orphan condition.

It was weeks before the rector's old housekeeper, who had been sent to attend the patient under the roof from whence she could not bear removal, was able to elicit from her despairing charge anything beyond exclamations of passionate regret for the loss of her father and the old black nurse of her infancy, who had perished in the ship; and who seemed to comprise all of earthly friends she either knew or remembered. Her father, from his name, had been a Spaniard, but married to an Englishwoman (her mother) long since dead; and was availing himself, it by degrees transpired, of the late cession of the island to the power of England, and the return of her troops engaged in the capture, to remove himself and his effects to the country of his late wife; to whose relatives, if any survived, he had intended consigning his daughter for the completion of her education; thus fulfilling the last wish of a parent, whom poor Estella remembered only as a pretty pale fair lady, lying always on a couch, and seldom able to do more than, at rare intervals, to kiss, and bless, and weep over her child.

It was in vain that first the housekeeper, and then her master, when the gradual recovery of the poor young creature permitted him to reap the reward of his exertions, sought to tax recollection for this beloved parent's maiden name. She had either never heard, or in the bewilderment of such danger and bereavement, totally forgotten it; and her father's, that of Certaldes, was too common in his own country, as well as unknown to all in England, to render discovery through that channel at all likely. Papers and property there had no doubt been in abundance on board to solve the mystery, had any been washed ashore amid the spoils of the insatiable wreckers, male and female, by whom, shocking to relate, no less than two hundred and seventy-five dead bodies were, first to last, stripped and consigned to a nameless grave. But though the strictest inquiries, assisted by offers of reward, were instituted among the plunderers by the rector, for any property belonging to the late Senor Certaldes, and in particular for a writing-case of some curious native wood, in which Estella remembered her mother's picture and all his most precious papers were kept—no clue was in the course of many months elicited; though the opportune recovery, at no small cost to her protector, of a chest of wearing apparel belonging to the young lady, at one time gave hopes of further restoration.

Correspondence with Trinidad now held out the only obvious

remaining chance either of throwing light on Estella's maternal connexions, or establishing her claim to such property as her father might have left behind him on the island. But the Spanish agents there, with whose names intimacy had rendered the poor girl familiar, it was found had left for Spain on the English occupation; and when, after the lapse of months, other channels of information were successively explored, the dilatory character of Spanish functionaries, their natural distrust, under existing circumstances, of transactions with England, and the apparent impunity with which, if any property did exist, it might be withheld by chicane from a minor indebted to the charity of strangers for an asylum and subsistence, soon wearied out the reluctant efforts of the proud, unmercenary, and already enamoured Lascelles.

To live long in a country desert in his eyes as Prospero's island, in daily intercourse with a being as lovely and unsophisticated as Miranda herself, and a thousand times more impassioned; a being, too, snatched from a watery grave by an impulse of humanity felt by one, not unconscious of many faults, as a redeeming trait of his erring life, without reciprocating an innocent attachment for the first man younger than her father, with whom strict Spanish seclusion had allowed her to come in contact, was not a thing to be expected in a person of less fiery temperament, and energetic, though perverted character, than Philip Lascelles. And it having soon become,—as soon, indeed, as her restored health and amended spirits rendered possible,—his avowed hope to anchor by indissoluble ties the rescued maiden to the shores on which she had, as if for the special purpose of cheering his solitude, been cast, he became no less anxious to do so ere the authority of relatives might interpose obstacles, or the discovery of an inheritance (on which, to do him justice, he never speculated) throw suspicion on his disinterested devotion to the planter's penniless daughter.

With a view to obviate, however, in either case, all future suspicion of undue advantage having been taken of her youthful inexperience or destitute condition, he requested and obtained for his *protégée* a few months' asylum in the house of my predecessor, the then incumbent of Q., a worthy old man, with a partner of equal kindness of heart, by whom the orphan was received with open arms, cherished during her stay as a daughter, and initiated far more deeply than to her too secular and worldly-minded lover might have been possible, in the precepts of that purer religion it had been her mother's dying wish her daughter should be sent to England to imbibe.

The task was not a difficult one. The pupil was abundantly docile, and the faith of her mother and benefactor came doubly recommended to a mind from which blended Catholic and negro superstitions quickly faded, as shadows flit before the presence of the sun. So completely indeed had the bewitching creature, in whom the warm affections and keen sensibilities of the south were tempered by much of her maternal country's retiring gentleness, won on the hearts of the good couple at the vicarage, that it was not without misgivings they could venture at length, on the day which made Estella seventeen, to consign the happiness of such a being to the somewhat precarious keeping of a

man, of whom intimacy, even in the proverbially delusive character of a lover, had certainly not given them a satisfactory impression.

That he was eminently handsome, and could be equally agreeable, they were at times as disposed as their young guest to admit. But there lurked in the cast of his fine aristocratic features a harsh and cynical expression; and across his temper, in his happiest and most urbane moments, the slightest contradiction sufficed to throw a moody veil, which augured ill for the future peace of mind even of one by whom his will was little likely to be disputed. Towards his own almost nominal flock he was known to be cold and indifferent; while, by his austere and unconciliatory deportment, the Catholic population, among whom it was his fate to live, were needlessly estranged. So much of pride and harshness was there indeed in his most praiseworthy actions, that even with a people so readily propitiated as the Irish, his deeds of personal gallantry during the shipwreck failed to earn him the praise of courage, while the attempts to check outrage and pillage which, more mildly exercised, might have reclaimed, or at least shamed the offenders, were secretly and bitterly resented, and gave birth to projects of future revenge.

The hints of his widely differing and truly Christian brother incumbent, how greatly an opposite line of conduct would promote his own comfort and usefulness, and still more, that of one whose happiness ought henceforth to be dearer than his own, were coldly and distastefully received; and though Estella, radiant in tears as in smiles, saw, in the act which made her irrevocably his, only the one passing cloud of temporary separation from her parental friends at Q—, more prescient eyes and hearts foresaw for their estranged darling either a life of storms and darkness, or the refuge from it of an early grave.

They were, in the first instance, happily disappointed; so soothingly for a time did the charms and sweetness of his young bride act on the character of Lascelles, and so completely did the having something to love seem to have reconciled him with himself and with mankind, that even the vicar and his wife had ceased to prognosticate evil, save from the presence of a felicity too bright and passionate—experience had taught the hoary-headed—for continuance here below. It found, ere long, its earthly termination—not as they had apprehended, and as appearances rendered too probable—in the diminished affection or faulty character of the husband, but in the removal, while the torch of love yet burned with unabated intensity, of the sole object by whom perhaps that wayward husband might have been, though at the expense of much mercifully-spared suffering, ultimately reclaimed.

Little more than a year after the pastor of Q— had performed for his brother of the cloth the office of uniting him with the object of his doting attachment, it was his sad task to consign to the tomb her inanimate remains, and to baptize, in tears of doubly painful sorrow, the image of herself she had left to console and chain to life her despairing survivor. “Take her away!” was his frantic exclamation, as the babe was held up for the kiss of benediction at the close of a rite from which the rebellious heart of Lascelles shrank in loathing; “Let me not see her till I can forget and forgive all she has cost me!”

It needed no second bidding to make the good clergyman's wife

take to her house and bosom the little fragile being so rudely welcomed into the world by one who ere long would, she thought, be but too thankful to reclaim, with softened feelings, this legacy of love. In vain, however, when the meeting, long deferred, was at length insisted on, did the kind couple look for the gentle and hallowed overflowings of natural tenderness at sight of a creature, whose resemblance to her mother formed, in their eyes, her most resistless charm. In the father's, it only seemed to arouse with fresh pangs a grief which, moody, turbulent, and unused to control as him by whom it was indulged, only exchanged the fury of the whirlwind for the sullen calm by which fresh tempests are ushered in. His intercourse with mankind had for years been limited enough—too limited for cherishing in his bosom the wholesome feelings of humanity. From this he now altogether withdrew; leaving it almost as much a matter of conscience as of compassion with his pitying neighbours at the vicarage, to rescue from neglect and possible unkindness the little girl, whom, unable to extort from him even a wish on the subject, they had named after her mother, Estella.

For many a long year did this philanthropic adoption prove, like other virtuous actions, its own best reward; first, in the smiles and cheerful prattle of a beautiful infant; and then, as reason dawned and her mind expanded, in the warm returns of affection, called forth by more than parental tenderness, on the part of a lovely girl. Alas! for her, that this should have formed, as was natural, perhaps, from her worse than orphan condition, and the declining years, verging on dotage, of her benefactors—the ruling if not sole feature in their conduct towards one destined in after life to exchange it for the most trying vicissitudes of domestic harshness. What in Mrs. S., while she lived, had been simple indulgence, degenerated on the part of her superannuated husband and his old housekeeper, into absolute spoiling; and as death removed from the poor girl the last fond nominal guardian of her youth, the keen high temper and headlong impetuosity of character she unhappily inherited from her father had been fostered into a strength from which old Kathleen often shrank appalled, and with which she was incapable of contending.

To this frail and inadequate guardianship, it was, however, poor Estella's fate to be consigned. For, at the period of her protector's death, Lascelles was, for the first time during a fifteen years' banishment, on a visit to England; restored by the death of an elder brother, and the precarious health of the next in succession, to some share of importance in the family whose pride his early misconduct had wounded, and who now condescended to remember that in the wilds of Ireland they had a relative immured.

Agreeably surprised to see that the rustication of half a lifetime had left the recluse aristocratic and exclusive as when he first quitted the high society of his privileged college, they never inquired whether his narrow sphere of duties had been adequately, or even tolerably fulfilled. "Thank heaven he has no brogue, no low Irish habits!" ejaculated his fashionable spinster sisters. "What a blessing there are no dowdy wife or children!" responded his highly-married ones. Of his marriage, a rumour had reached them; but the wife, a

Spaniard, and no doubt a Catholic, was happily dead; and his "wild Irish girl," of a daughter, about whom he seemed to care little and know less, could either be polished up at a fashionable boarding-school into something presentable, or left in Ireland out of sight, to marry some neighbouring clergyman, or settle down into the wife of her father's curate.

They little thought how nearly their random speculations were on the brink of being realized. On the plea of family affairs of importance,³ Lascelles' leave of absence from Ireland was indefinitely prolonged. A curate became of course necessary, and one was appointed by the bishop most likely, by his zeal and energy, to make up to the little neglected flock for the coldness of the willing absentee. To the recommendation, in the eyes of all the females in the parish, of being extremely young and handsome, he added—those of the sole person in it for whose opinion he was likely to care—that of being the only attractive or cultivated individual, of corresponding age to her own, with whom she had ever been thrown into contact. Not her poor mother, when cast an orphan at sixteen on the rocky shores of W—, had less knowledge of mankind, or had lived in more utter estrangement from congenial associations, than Estella at the same age, after a lifetime passed in the secluded vicarage of Q—.

Is it a wonder, then, if Lascelles—cold, austere, and unprepossessing as was his fine regal countenance—had appeared to the Spanish maiden a being of a superior order—Charles Denovan, the nobleness of whose exquisite features was tempered by a mildness allied alike to his character and calling—should assume in her daughter's eyes somewhat of superhuman perfection? If the mother had loved, nay, idolized the man to whom she owed her life—the child soon actually worshipped, with adoration more perilous, though more pardonable, the pastor who realized all that her early associations had shadowed forth of the *beau idéal* of piety, while his society served at once to make her feel the deficiencies of an imperfect education, and insensibly to repair and compensate them.

For months, ay, almost for two years, did their intercourse continue, with as little of restraint as the important and scarcely exerted guardianship of old Kathleen could impose on her wilful charge. Part of it was passed with her nursling under the roof of the long vacant vicarage of Q—; the alternate duties of which afforded the young curate abundant opportunities of enjoying the sole relaxation the neighbourhood afforded, in the society of its inmates; nor, when they of necessity removed to the equally deserted glebe-house of X—, was there any one in the rude adjoining hamlet entitled or inclined to find fault, if the cruel rector's pretty and neglected daughter sought and found consolation in the good new curate's frequent visits.

That these were devoted to the laudable and grateful task of imparting to her ill-stored mind some share of the instruction with which his own well-regulated one teemed, formed to Denovan himself the motive and excuse for an intercourse, the very fascinations of which might otherwise have awakened his doubts as to its propriety. But to surprise her high-born father with his child's rapid

progress in cultivation and accomplishment—to lure him, by this added charm, to tardy acknowledgment of her claim on his affections—to insinuate, through the medium of her influence, the religious spirit in which he was so wofully deficient—and then to receive, perchance, (this was in truth but a faint and trembling hope, forming little if any drawback on the disinterestedness of the pursuit,) the reward of all his solitudes in the hand of the being he had contributed to embellish for earth, and train for heaven, seemed a design so blameless in conception, and delightful in execution, that an older man than the young ardent Irish curate might have been pardoned for luxuriating in its anticipation.

Engrossed, meanwhile, as Lascelles had become by ambitious projects (long dormant, but never suppressed) of church preferment and aggrandizement in England—it is possible he might have viewed with indifference, or even ratified with contemptuous sanction, his daughter's humble choice of happiness, had that daughter's beauty been one degree less dazzling, or the efforts of her preceptor to array it in a garb of corresponding cultivation been less fatally successful. Had Estella continued, in appearance and manners, the wild, half Spanish, half Irish child of impulse and passion, which, in fact, after all love's diligence, events proved her to have intrinsically remained, not even her glorious flashing eyes, slight springy southern figure, or that Andalusian grace, restrained by none of the timidity by which her mother's more subdued fascinations of mind and person were veiled, would have induced her fastidious father to produce her among his English relatives.

But night and day had the infatuated Denovan sat forging the golden chain by which his idol was to be fettered to the car of pride; and well might his heart and his hopes die within him, when detecting, even amid the first emotions of a meeting in which the father triumphed for a moment over the man, the sparkle of gratified vanity in the eye, that he fondly hoped would have overflowed with long-repressed tears of parental love.

It was, in truth, a strange and almost fearful relation in which they stood—that long-estranged father and child! At one moment, Lascelles, all stoical as he was, could have snatched his daughter to his heart, for that resemblance to her mother, for which, at other times, as a memento of buried felicity, he almost felt towards her, his infant, an unnatural loathing. At one time he would hate himself for his long causeless banishment of an unoffending child; and then, something prophetic within would seem to whisper that from his very crime would spring its merited punishment.

Estella, again, to whom no one memory of infantine endearment or token of early affection had hallowed the name of "Father," felt towards the cold, supercilious being thus designated, far more of awe than love. And soon—as his brief show of tenderness subsided into natural apathy—as by degrees his ambitious views for herself began to develope themselves, and, above all, as his conduct towards Denovan assumed in her eyes the character of an outrage at once on gratitude and love—the vague notions of filial duty which had so long floated around her fancy, rather than taken root in her heart, gave

place to a wild, reckless determination to seek refuge from being the puppet of his ambition, in the fulfilment of her own destiny in the humbler path of happiness she had chosen for herself.

Impetuous, however, and at the same time determined, as subsequent events showed her character, under the influence of unlimited indulgence from childhood, to have become, she had remaining duty and discretion to unfold in her gentlest manner, and in his happiest supposed mood, to her father her own views for life, and the wishes of the too modest and now absent Denovan. She little dreamed, however, at what a critical and fatal moment a revelation, to which he was indeed, from rumour, no stranger, had been made to her ambitious parent. She found him in his study, absorbed in the contemplation of a once elegant, but now defaced and worm-eaten *escritoire*. Before him lay a picture, and letters, yellow, time-worn, and defaced; and beside them rolls of parchment, with seals of foreign wax appended. He started angrily as she entered, but, soothed apparently by the subject of his previous contemplations, drew her more affectionately than usual towards him, and showing her the miniature said, "There, Estella, is your long-missing English grandmother's picture. May you resemble *her* in fate and fortunes, as you do one still dearer in outward form and feature."

"It was of my 'fate and fortunes' I came to speak to you just now, dear father," replied Estella, hailing as glad omens his rarely flushed cheek and moistened eye. "If you are pleased with me, as you said when we first met, it is all due to an excellent person whom you can never reward enough, and who will only be rewarded in one way, which he is too shy to ask for himself. Will you give your daughter's hand, where her heart is already, to Charles Denovan, and then her 'fortunes' on earth, and 'fate' for eternity, will be as secure as parent's love can wish, or care of man can make them?"

Had Mr. Lascelles indeed heard for the first, instead of the fiftieth time, that the curate loved his daughter, and that the affection was mutual, he could not have "looked" more "unutterable things" on the occasion. His at all times tremendous figure dilated, his large eyes flashed with scorn, as he exclaimed, "Degenerate girl, before you throw yourself away with my consent, on that presumptuous beggar, I would see you in your coffin, or married to the veriest outcast this land of ruffians bears upon its bosom!"

For a moment the high spirit of the daughter quailed before this wholly unforeseen depth of parental anathema; in the next it rallied. "You may deny me your consent, father," muttered the undaunted girl, in accents thick with suppressed emotion; "but either Charles Denovan shall be my husband, or the 'outcast' you give your child for an alternative, shall make you rue that you ever withheld it." Appalled in his turn by the tone as well as substance of this strange reply, Lascelles turned round to look at his daughter. She was pale and rigid as a marble statue—he thought of her mother in her coffin, and wished he had not used the ominous word.

Nothing more passed between them on the forbidden subject. Estella, emancipated, as she conceived, from parental control by her explicit declaration, wrote unreservedly to the absent Denovan;

who—true to the principles of honour and delicacy (now more than ever consolatory to him) which had induced him to decline entangling her by any engagement, or even any direct avowal of his too obvious sentiments—forbore, at the expense of some self-denial, to reply to expressions so flattering to an absent lover's heart. He had ere long reason doubly to applaud the line he had so conscientiously taken, when a letter of a very different tenor, from Mr. Lascelles, for ever annihilated the hopes of the humble curate, by informing him that by the death-bed confession of an Irish crone, who, in revenge for his defrauding her of some cherished spoil in the shipwreck, had for twenty years withheld from him his father-in-law's fished-up writing desk, his daughter was likely to become, in right of her Spanish grandfather, a considerable heiress—and from the recently-discovered connexions of her English grandmother, entitled to mingle with the highest of that aristocracy, among whom he himself was about to resume his proper place. This information (of which his daughter was continued purposely ignorant) was communicated by him to Mr. Denovan, to be acted upon as the sentiments of honour and principle laid claim to, and he believed possessed by that gentleman, would naturally dictate. If for base mercenary views he could subject a daughter to parental malediction and personal degradation, his course was open; but if, as he was willing to hope he was, incapable of conduct so injurious to her for whom he professed a disinterested attachment—there was, for the evils a father so justly deprecated, but one remedy—his own speedy union with another object.

The keen eye of Lascelles had, during their short intercourse, fathomed precisely the depths and shallows of his late curate's character. By wooing to his arms—at the expense, if necessary, of her father's abjured riches and insane pride—the fragile and wayward Estella, he would have but consulted her happiness in this world and the next; and perhaps lent stability to virtues, the germ of which he had scarcely had time to deposit ere her bosom, in the torrent of passion, swept them resistlessly away. But piqued on the tender ground of honour and principle, shrinking from the character of an abettor of filial impiety, too unselfish to contemplate for a moment a personal gratification acquired by impoverishing and degrading the object of his youthful idolatry, Charles unhesitatingly adopted the alternative of self-sacrifice placed before him by Mr. Lascelles; and by offering his hand within three months to a cousin in a deep decline—whose passage to the tomb would, he knew, be smoothed by this proof of esteem, if not of a warmer sentiment—he enabled the triumphant father to set at rest the anxieties which had, for weeks past, been evidently, though silently, preying on his daughter's mind, by carelessly announcing at breakfast from the newspaper—"So! our late curate has done the wise and proper thing, and married a woman in his own sphere of life! I wish him joy of coming to his senses, and hope you will now come to yours."

There was more danger at present of their forsaking her, and life with them; for pale and rigid as she had become when her father's decision against the union had been made known to her, it was with an eye more fixed, and a cheek and lip more bloodless still, that she

heard of her lover's infidelity. "You have done this, father," gasped she once more, in the same hoarse, unearthly whisper—"somehow or other, you have brought it about; and now, O God, you have left me only my part of the work to do!" Once more the tyrant father quaked before his daughter's wild aspect, and the yet wilder words by which it was accompanied.

Long interrupted by illness on one side, and the awkwardness of detected intrigue on the other, the intercourse between the unhappy parent and child, when at length renewed, forced and unnatural as it necessarily was, became henceforth mingled with a strange touch of mutual forbearance. Lascelles felt that he had practised away the happiness of his daughter with a man "worth all his tribe"—that, ignorant as she still remained of the motives of his apparent desertion, her feelings, as well as hopes, must have received a cruel blow, and he would have been a worse father than even temper and selfishness had made him, could he have looked wholly unmoved on the havoc he had made. Compassion was in him simple humanity—the recoil of nature from the sufferings of the worm we tread on. But why his poor victim, while she shrank from his caresses with unconquerable aversion, should yet cast towards him looks of occasional pity not unallied to tenderness, could only be accounted for by the relents of filial instinct, if not affection, from the meditated infliction of some dreadful blow.

This continued, till a letter under cover to old Kathleen, (a former one, enclosed with the straightforwardness of innocence to her father, the pusillanimity of guilt had induced him to suppress,) of congratulation from her injured lover on the brighter prospects under the influence of which he had been induced to withdraw his now presumptuous claims, turned once more the tide of poor Estella's impetuous feelings into an unfilial and fatal channel.

"An heiress, am I?" exclaimed she bitterly; "my father little thinks whom the independence he deemed poor Charles too low-born to share, will ere long go to enrich. 'Rather the veriest outcast upon earth,' was his alternative. He has yet to see that it can be mine!"

It was now the dark and dreary month of December, (dark and dreary in a peculiar manner on the black shores of W—,) long before which Lascelles had hoped to transplant himself and his daughter to a more congenial sphere. But difficulties and obstacles in the way of a successor, to whom it was expedient in person to deliver up the parish and parsonage, combined, with a superstitious desire to pass on the spot of her rescue the dismal Christmas-eve of his lost wife's shipwreck, to retard the departure of Mr. Lascelles. Much of his daughter's time was in the interval passed at old Kathleen's—now established in a cottage of the hamlet at the fireside of a widowed daughter—left (like Wordsworth's Betty Foy) the doting mother of an idiot boy.

For this lad the sympathies of Estella had, in her own happier days, often been called forth—as well by his palpable, but in no respect disgusting deficiencies of intellect, as by the handsome though 'lack-lustre' countenance and a devotion towards herself, as "granny's

pretty lady," which made a smile, or token of approbation, from her a subject of pride and fondness for days together.

"If I am to marry an outcast, as my father wished," harped the unhappy girl, with a superstition which had in it somewhat of the wildness of incipient insanity — "it shall at least be a harmless one! one that I can shield from evil and gladden with a smile, and please with a toy! just enough too of a husband to save *me* from being made a toy for my proud father's ambition to sport with! Denovan can never be jealous of *him*," added she with a smile, "any more than I am of his poor sickly cousin whom they tell me he married to save her life, and leave me at liberty. But O, Charles, Charles!" she would exclaim, "I fear you will repent having done it, when you hear what *I* must yet do before I can fulfil my part of the bargain!"

And truly did she judge the heart of one to whom her immortal part had ever been the most truly dear, when imagining that the pang of losing her would be light to that of hearing of the recantation of their mutual faith by which she was obliged to ensure the legality of the suicidal act she had so long, with the perverted ingenuity of despair, been meditating. The early lessons of Kathleen, (herself the unwilling resident of years beneath a heretical roof,) and the idea of its being the ancestral creed of her Spanish forefathers, one but too congenial to her own superstitious nature—combined with the distrust towards Protestantism which the want of principle in her father, and of firmness in her lover, had tended to foster in her mind, reconciled Estella to an abjuration which alone would enable an unscrupulous popish priest to unite, without fear of legal consequences, her fate to that of the moon-struck Michael.

It is painful to dwell on a part of a *true story* which one would fain leave shrouded for ever in its own impenetrable veil of mystery. Suffice it, that on Christmas Eve 18—, at the hour when her father had once in reality, and now again in imagination, buffeted the waves for her mother's life—her infatuated child, to inflict a pang on an unnatural parent, plunged herself soul and body in an abyss of woe to which the depths of the raging ocean were as nothing.

The proud parish priest, whom Lascelles had uniformly braved and defied, instead of conciliating—though he shrank from himself performing the obnoxious rite—was not loath to procure a willing substitute in an irresponsible stranger; and mad Michael, in presence of his half-pleased, half-terrified mother, (for Kathleen was too shrewd as well as faithful to be taken into their perilous counsels)—his implicit obedience to the "pretty lady," secured by previous presents and encouragement, stood up before the stranger priest, in a new suit of clothes, as fair a bridegroom to look upon, as though a soul had informed that goodly tenement which nature had been pleased to leave a vacuum.

If, in his gawky inexperience, he let fall the ring, with which he had played like a child, unconscious of its use and value—if, in pronouncing the desecrated vows, a shudder of horror crept over the frame of the perjured bride—if, when the stolen ceremony was over, she fled like some guilty thing to her father's welcome threshold,

which it formed no part of her plan, if plan it could be called, unless thrust from it, to forsake;—what was it all, when weighed against the insane triumph of being able, at the breakfast hour, to repay to that father the announcement of her lover's marriage, by the astounding intelligence that his heiress-daughter—the descendant on one side of Spanish grandees, and on the other of English nobles—was the clandestinely-wedded wife of the papist, mad Michael?

It was with a more than usually cheerful countenance that Mr. Lascelles came down that morning. It was his last day but one in Ireland—always hated, and now more than ever distasteful Ireland!—and letters from England greeted his awakening, full of bright hopes for himself, and openings for an alliance such as his loftiest aspirations could have devised for his daughter. He gazed on her as she sat, with flushed cheek and flashing eye, at the board, and thought how well a coronet would become that regal brow, which would scarce have shamed a diadem.

"There are tidings for you here, Stella," said he, "that may well put to flight all your pensive reveries, or, rather, lend them newer and fairer subjects. My ideas—which I forbore to communicate lest they should lead to disappointment—of an alliance for you with my old college friend, (though my junior by some years,) Lord M——, seem likely to meet the concurrence of his family. From mine, I feel sure," added he, with an exulting smile, "they can have no obstacle to encounter."

"Your daughter is married already!" was the astounding reply, in a voice of singular distinctness, though scarce raised above a whisper—"the outcast's bride!—the wife of mad Michael Trahorne!"

The effort was made, and the poor girl, who thus announced her shame, "recoiling," like the poet's Fear, "e'en from the sound herself had made," sank fainting into her seat, while her lately proud parent, staggering as from a blow, had to lean for support on the nearest book-case. The daughter rallied first.

"Father," said she, "let us understand each other. Thwarted in my legitimate affections, and destined, I knew, to be the sacrifice of your ambition, wonder not nor blame if I fulfilled your own imprecation, and shielded myself by sacrilege from prostitution. United in name only, to one, who, while he bars the door against others, neither can nor will claim me himself, I am ready to prove henceforth the dutiful daughter you have never yet suffered me to be, since I can now live, untortured by mercenary proposals, on the memory of a love I shall carry unsullied to the grave. Take me to England with you, father," said she, imploringly; "and if it hurts your pride to say I am married to a mad boy, say I have taken on me vows of another kind, and you will say but the truth—for I am a Catholic, father, since yesterday, as my Spanish ancestors were before me, till, by wedding with a heretic, one of them perilled my lost mother's soul, and laid up wretchedness in store for her unhappy offspring!"

The passionate girl's expostulation might have been longer poured forth unchecked, had her father's paralyzed astonishment not given place to a seizure alarmingly resembling apoplexy. His daughter flew to afford him assistance, but his remaining strength and conscious-

ness were exerted to spurn her from him. Leaving her prostrate on the floor, another desperate effort enabled him to gain his study, where he remained buried in a chaos of reflections, the tenor of which may be left to the imagination, the whole remainder of the day.

His first impulse—that of any proud man similarly circumstanced, and one on which, perhaps, in her heart, a no less proud woman had unconsciously calculated—was to take steps for annulling, if possible, his daughter's disgraceful marriage. Its clandestine nature, her being a minor and an heiress, and the bridegroom a known imbecile, would have left it open to attack, even where interest less powerful was likely to be exercised. But, could the consequences of her present rashness be concealed, or even cancelled, he had little hope of cajoling, or even coercing, the resolute girl into any of the brilliant matches she had thus sought to escape from at the cost of worse than suicide; while the cloak this act, if known, would afford for setting her aside as insane, and possessing himself of the administration, at least, of her grandfather's accumulated property, held out to his ambitious mind, on reflection, a preferable mode of aggrandizement. He had never, as we have seen, entertained towards his alienated child any save feelings of injustice and unkindness; and now that she was the voluntary bride of a distracted papist—a despised natural—he would disown her for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own headlong disobedience. So, compromising the matter with his conscience by assuring her (in a letter of characteristic sternness and austerity of rebuke) of an ample allowance to secure her against pecuniary distress, he enjoined her to repair to the husband and home she had chosen, "for better for worse," and to expiate, according to her newly-adopted Catholic tenets, by her life-long penance as a wife, her undutiful conduct as a daughter.

Before the letter could be read or comprehended by one whom the "compunctious visitings of remorse" had already thrown into a fever, the father she was never again to see had sailed for England; and his wild, wayward girl, whose portion, but for him, would have been happiness, and, but for herself, might have been at least splendour, was thrown, by their mutual pride and misconduct, on the tender mercies of the low Irish relations of her nominal husband.

Old Kathleen, whose vexation at the connexion far outweighed any honour she might have been tempted to derive from it, had knowledge enough of the world to rescue her nursling from some of its direst afflictions, by removing with her to a separate cottage—a sadly poor one, indeed, like all the rest of the village—where, at least, she could be secure from her grandson's hourly intrusion, and where the good woman attended on her young quondam mistress with unabated respect.

But it was not always easy, even for granny, old and infirm as she was, to restrain within due bounds the familiarities of others; and the money with which Michael's mother, and through her her son, was too profusely supplied, put into her head a world of impertinence, and into his a world of mischief, from which till then the poor simpleton had been perfectly free. The secret of his wealth drew around him idle comrades in plenty, by whom he was taught to drink and to gam-

ble, and even to bully, in his cups, the "pretty lady," his veneration for whom had so long been, unconsciously, a gratification, though a slender one, to her pride. Harassed by the tears and self-upbraidings of her nursling on the one hand, and the complaints and encroachments of her daughter on the other, old Kathleen, Stella's last friend and supporter, was, ere long, laid on her deathbed; and, worked upon by the priest, to whom humbling the daughter of Lascelles was a labour of love, joined in persuading the unhappy girl that it was her duty to try and rescue poor Michael from the ruinous indulgence of his mother, and the influence of evil associates.

When sober, the authority of the "pretty lady" over the weak lad was still paramount; but, when under the effects of liquor, his nickname of "mad Michael" became but too applicable—a stronger sedative than the mere reproving look, which at other times would make him shrink abashed, was required. It was his old grandmother, Kathleen, by whom the administration on such occasions of a small quantity of opium was first suggested; and the charm wrought by a few drops of the drug in a glass of some sweet liqueur, in procuring peace for the harassed mind of poor Stella, was too convenient and delightful not to ensure its repetition.

It was on the night after old Kathleen's funeral, when the strange boisterous sounds of mingled mirth and sorrow characterizing an Irish wake had given place to a solemn stillness more akin to the feelings of her whose first and last humble friend on earth had been taken from her, that a clamorous knocking at the door announced the return of mad Michael to the house he was henceforward to consider as his home. The crone by whom the faithful Katty was sadly superseded in the household opened the door—but even she shrank back from the wild glare of the crazed lad's eye, and the antic glee, harmonizing so ill with a chamber of death and his weeds of mourning.

If such were the feelings of the rude Irishwoman, what may be supposed to have been those of her mistress—heart-broken as she sat at her lonely hearth, estranged by her own reckless act from her natural position and protectors—when her solitude was invaded by the discordant mirth of mingled intoxication and insanity! To apply on the occasion the ever-ready resource of the drugged cordial was only too natural; but when this, contrary to custom, failed of its wonted effect, and he continued boisterous and troublesome as at first, so far, alas! from being inclined or being able to perform her painful duty to the unfortunate being before her, by soothing and retaining him within doors, his wretched wife felt it to be a relief when, stimulated rather than sobered by the somewhat larger than usual dose, he again sallied forth in quest of his boon companions.

Absorbed in grief for her faithful nurse, and in all the melancholy reflections to which her own hopeless condition was well calculated to give rise, the gray dawn, just struggling with the expiring lamp, found Estella still sitting in the desolate chamber, whence the corpse of her first friend had been a few hours before removed. A sound of footsteps, as if something heavy were borne by numbers, was heard approaching the house; several low taps on the door aroused the sleeping servant; it was opened; and as Estella hung in breathless sus-

pense, lamp in hand, gazing over the narrow wooden staircase, the light flashed on what seemed, and too surely proved to be, the inanimate body of her crazed bridegroom.

Remorse and horror for her possible share in the catastrophe paralyzed his unhappy wife's tongue, but, in reply to the questions of the old woman, it appeared, from the testimony of his now thoroughly-sobered associates, that, shortly after joining them at the usual scene of their orgies, he had laid his head on the table as if to sleep, from which sleep he never again awoke!

On the bed whence the aged and shrunken limbs of his grandmother had been but a few hours before extended, was laid the stalwart but motionless form, and features placid—nay, in death almost intellectual—of poor mad Michael; and it may be questioned whether even the clamorous grief of his doting mother did not derive its chief alleviation from the tears, heart-wrung and bitter, which rained from the eyes of the proud “lady” over the corpse of her fancied victim.

She soon after disappeared from the village; and it might be some six months after the events before narrated, and my assuming possession, as successor to its late venerable inmates, of the vicarage of Q——, that my natural misgivings regarding strange visitors at a late hour in the evening were relieved by the announcement of my old housekeeper, that a young woman wished to speak to me a moment in my study. I immediately went to her, anticipating, from the commiserating tone of my duenna, a case of no ordinary emergency among my humble parishioners, but actually recoiled on encountering, from beneath the hood of a common Irish cloak, the flash of an eye which, subdued and tear-dimmed as it was, spoke of something far loftier, as well as sadder, than ordinary peasant distress.

Before I could interfere to prevent her, the fair intruder was at my feet, imploring that, even from one stained with the guilt of murder, I would not withhold the consolations of religion.

“Murder!” I involuntarily exclaimed—“with *that* one like you could never, surely, have any connexion!”

“Too much!—too near a connexion!” replied she despairingly, “for you see before you a wretch who has broken her father’s heart, and taken away—God knows it was unwittingly—the life of her husband!”

She then told me, with many tears and disjointed exclamations, the heads of the story I afterwards gathered, as above detailed. That it interested me deeply in its unfortunate heroine, I need not say. I insisted on her accepting for some days an asylum under the roof where her childhood had been passed, and to which she had been irresistibly impelled as the scene of her self-inflicted—but no longer Catholic—confession; and feeling it above all things desirable to remove from her mind the impression that a quantity so inconsiderable of a soporific as that administered by her could have cost the life of a youth in robust health, I rode over next day to investigate (along with the incumbent who had succeeded her father in the cure of X——) the particulars of the lad’s last fatal drinking bout.

There prevailed at the time, it seemed, a frolic (of which, since then, fatal advantage has been taken by ruffians of the same country

for the actual deprivation of life,) of introducing narcotics, chiefly of a harmless nature, into the liquor of those inclined to be noisy or quarrelsome; and it turned out that Michael proving, as we have seen, on the night in question peculiarly unmanageable, had been silenced in a way often before practised by his thoughtless companions, who were in the habit of availing themselves of the slumbers thus induced to ease him of his truly "superfluous" cash—one to whom it had never proved other than a curse. The opiate administered by them on this occasion, however, co-operating with that he had previously received, had for once proved fatally powerful; while, alarmed at the consequences of their frolic, the sharers in it of course kept their own counsel, too happy to escape (from the absence of a coroner's inquest in Ireland) investigation into the cause of their comrade's decease.

Delighted to be able to relieve the mind of the unfortunate young lady, with whose beauty and hard usage from her father all the hamlet I had left still rang, I returned to Q——, fraught with tidings which I trusted would restore the bloom to her cheek, and the lustre to her eye. She thanked me—deeply and warmly thanked me—while the strong shudder that passed over her frame on hearing the details of the crime in which she had been an involuntary participator, seemed to indicate how heavily the guilt of even manslaughter had sat down on her soul. But the work of grief, and shame, and remorse, was already done; the elasticity which should have taught the young heart to rebound, for ever gone; and the once fair, and still lovely, Estella drooped so rapidly, that I became seriously alarmed, and summoned the best medical advice the district afforded.

The doctor, a kind and skilful man, saw with an eagle glance at once the cause and termination of the malady. "A broken heart, Mr. Travers," said he to me, shaking his head mournfully, "and for that the *Materia Medica* has no cure. *You* are the only practitioner who can prescribe successfully here; and even you, alas! can only apply palliatives, and smooth the inevitable transition."

I followed up the good physician's hint, and set myself devotedly and disinterestedly to bind up the wounds, both secular and spiritual, of this most interesting of penitents. In the very room where the rudiments of religion were first inculcated, in all their native purity, by the venerable protectors of her youth, and where her infant tongue first lisped in the accents of prayer, I heard her abjure the errors of Romanism, and revert, with a tenacity of faith the more firm from its having been temporarily shaken, to the blessed truths of the Protestant creed, as first displayed to her in all their clearness by her late father's curate, the still dear and lamented Denovan.

Before these bright truths, and the glorious anticipations of eternity, all the remaining frost-work of pride and halo of passion melted gradually away; and Stella could dictate, in all sincerity, a letter to her father, (long since splendidly and miserably married,) the sole regret breathing in which was, that she could not at his feet sue for forgiveness, and cheer his decline with the filial endearments for which her softened spirit yearned.

One unexpressed, but well I knew not uncherished expectation, was strangely and unexpectedly realised.

Duty obliged me to tear myself, at a moment when no danger of immediate dissolution seemed pending, from my interesting charge. My absence was inevitably prolonged; and when, at length, a summons to come if I would see her alive brought me, at all hazards, to her bed of death, I found it had been smoothed—"not according to man's device," but the inscrutable decree of Providence—by the apparent accident which had substituted for the neighbouring clergyman, summoned by my people, a casual assistant in this gentleman's sabbath duties, in the person of the chosen of her heart, the object of her first earthly love, the ever faithful and now widowed Donovan!

We laid her head together in the grave, but it may be believed I yielded the first place, in so doing, to him whose sole consolation in having resigned here below a treasure so recklessly thrown away by herself and others, lay in the hope of receiving it, purified from earthly dross and alloy, in a future and better world!

THE CHOICE OF A FRIEND.

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.

GIVE not thy friendship to the fickle!—They
Will, wind-like, veer from faith to faithlessness;
Forsaking thee ere yet their last caress
Hath cooled upon thy cheek, or ceased to press
Upon thy breast!—Let not thy friendship's ray
Linger upon the vain!—Their love's excess
Springs but from flattered fancy, and decay
Attends their warmest shows of tenderness,
If but one check their petty pride receive
From truthful care!—Thy friendship do not give
To the capricious, to the proud, the light!
The first all causelessly thy breast will leave,—
The second shun thee in thine hour of blight,—
The third, from very lightness, thy fond heart deceive!

May I not love the changeful? Are not they
Most like myself, e'en in their changefulness?—
Not so! not so! My love hath ne'er grown less,
Nor chilled to such as won its tenderness,
Nor left them,—though they wandered!—Every day
Unfolds the vanity, which to suppress
Within my nature, I attempt in vain;
And must I flee my fellows, and disdain
The faulty, since their very faults are mine?
Caprice, and pride, and light frivolity,
Do they not oft their triune force combine
To slay true peace and drown humility
Within my spirit? Let me then still feel
A love for MAN, tho' Time *his* and *my* faults reveal!

Sidmouth, August, 1841.

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THE THREE KNIGHTS AND THE LADY ERRANT:

A TALE OF TRUE CHIVALRY.

BY EDWARD HOWARD, AUTHOR OF "RATTLIN THE REEFER," "JACK ASHORE," &c. &c.

MANY very beautiful things have been said by the best and the worst writers on that most beautiful of all subjects, woman. Some of these aphorisms we would repeat, did we not fear that our intelligent readers would immediately discover the plagiarisms; but the greater number of them we shall avoid, simply because they are not worth the repeating. But of this the gentler sex may be well assured, that whenever an author begins his essay by lauding excessively the ladies in general, some dreadfully disparaging story at their expense is most particularly to be feared.

Of the manifold and intensely good qualities of woman, we can say nothing new; and as to the other side of the question, if there be a dark side to it, we will not trump up old stories in order to open anew old grievances. The sex might have had their faults some very long time ago, but as to the present time—— Well, show me an error that may be their peculiar and distinctive attribute, and I will show two excellent reasons for it—a liability from which the ladies have always been exempt, both *de jure*, and, which is better still, *de facto* also.

Having premised thus much, it will be understood, without any great effort of the discriminating faculties, that, in the tale of chivalry we are going to relate, nothing disrespectful is meant to the *belles* of the present day, who are as unlike the beauties of the feudal ages as any husband can wish. Is it possible to say more in their praise?

In that year of redemption in which there was a great probability of all the southern part of Christendom being reduced to Mahometism and slavery by the victorious arms of the Turks, Hungary suffered excessively. The host of the prophet had swept through the whole land, and had left behind them that emphatic kind of peace—the solitude of the sword's making. In fact, the country was only safe for robbers, knights-errant, and damsels erring. The fields were fruitful in adventures, and nothing else; the villages were burned, the small towns in a state of ruin, and the larger ones in a state of siege.

The day had been sultry; the evening breeze had just begun to temper the oppressive heat, when a knight, armed cap-à-pie, emerged from the shades of a forest of tall cork-trees. No crustaceous animal, from the crab to the crocodile, was better provided with defensive armour than he. Before the man could be got at, he must have been cracked like a hazelnut. He was a fine specimen of six feet two of

humanity plated up in steel. His horse was a powerful animal of the Flemish breed—not swift, but gigantic, large-boned, and sinewy. He certainly would not have excelled among a field of hunters, or have cleared a fence with a ditch on either side; but at a solid, heavy charge, he would have borne down before him almost any obstacle that chivalry could have opposed to him.

The knight was resplendent in bright steel armour, relieved and ornamented by inlaid silver. He extolled himself in the name of Sir Blondelin Blanchefoi. In everything he affected the colour of white. His shield, which, at the moment he appeared from out the forest, hung suspended before his breast, was one surface of polished steel, with a silver sun wrought in its centre; under which was an inscription, in some villanous provincial language, to the effect that he championed unto the death for the purity of the Norman dames. If the noble knight had any faith in his motto, he must have early settled his worldly affairs. As we have before mentioned that the weather was extremely hot, it is not surprising that Sir Blondelin rode leisurely forward with his casque hooked on to his saddle, the long white plume of which almost swept the ground. Being bareheaded, he displayed a round, ruddy, sun-tanned face; a large mouth, with very thick lips; a nose, by no means too prominent, with wide and very open nostrils; a large merry blue eye; a forehead marvellously low—at which we must not be surprised, considering what he had undertaken to fight for; and thick, curly, sandy hair. He was a jovial fellow; and when he smiled, he displayed a row of immensely large, yet beautifully white teeth. He could not have been more than three-and-twenty, and his thick, bull-dog looking neck told of muscular strength but little less than Herculean.

With a hoarse cracked voice—for the man was thirsty—he was shouting out, with all the vigour of his lungs, what he was pleased to call a roundelay in honour of his lady-love. It would have been difficult to have determined, from the expression of his features, whether he was performing a task or doing himself a pleasure; if the latter, he was most assuredly alone in the enjoyment, for a more discordant noise could not well have marred the stillness of that beautiful evening. However, as there was no one to hiss, Sir Blondelin rode and sang on without interruption, but not without company.

At a respectful distance behind him was his squire—a lean, strong man, with a dark hard countenance, and a most villanous hungry aspect. His jaws were tremendous, and his teeth, sharp, huge, and straggling, gave him a wolfish look, that might well startle young people of both sexes, particularly if they were plump. Though infinitely worse armed, he was nearly as well mounted as his master; and so he needed to be, for he carried, in the first place, Sir Blondelin's huge war-lance in his right hand. Immediately before him, on the saddle-bow, was a large skin, containing some four or five gallons of a strong but execrably-tasted wine, so vicious with resin, that no one but a knight-errant or his squire could have smacked their lips after drinking it. An iron pot hung on the one side of him, containing a rude tinder-box, some salt, a piece of soap, a shaving-box, and two very detestable razors; whilst attached to one of the three legs

of the said pot was a serviceable billet for cutting wood, and which, when the occasion offered itself, was found as useful in lopping off the limb of a man as of a tree. To balance all these implements of housekeeping that hung on the left side of the squire, there was a capacious bag of meal on the right, among which were safely stored sundry pieces of fat bacon, neats' tongues, and a few lengths of strongly garlicked German sausage. Behind him was lashed the carcass of a newly-slaughtered sheep. We mention all these particulars to show that knights-errant did not formerly, as is vainly supposed, travel over vast plains and deserts for weeks and months, living with the squires only upon the memory of their loves and the breath of honour. Of course, their chroniclers have been too proud or too busy to notice these mean and sordid things: so that the readers of romances have been led into the error that heroes never ate but at kingly banquets; drank, but out of golden goblets, at the sound of the trumpet; or slept, but under silken canopies, on beds of down, in the arms of beauty, excepting, merely for the sake of variety, now and then upon the flinty rock.

Guiscardo was the name of Sir Blondelin's squire; and he was armed with a good cross-bow that shot iron bolts, and which made very ugly bruises; a straight, sharp, two-edged sword; and a *couteau de chasse*, that performed the service of a dagger, with a point made expressly for the purpose of being thrust through the bars of a vizor, and thus thrusting out the life of any helpless unhorsed man in iron whom it might be convenient to despatch. Altogether, the knight and his squire made a pair of very formidable homicides.

The knight and squire jogged on leisurely through the open country for about half a mile—the former still labouring at his roundelay, and the latter solacing himself by munching and sucking the end of a German sausage, which he held in his left hand, his right supporting perpendicularly his master's lance. As they proceeded, the knight, who was about a hundred paces in advance, descried, first, a clump of trees; then a white tomb in the midst of them; and lastly, a knight, like himself, completely armed, apparently keeping guard over the monument. At this spectacle, Sir Blondelin Blanchefoi drew up suddenly, and turning his head, shouted to his faithful squire, who had just time to hurry his sausage into the meal unperceived.

"Holla, Sir Varlet! lace on my helmet, and give me my lance! It seemeth to me that we shall run a course with that valiant knight, for he is pricking towards us."

"Run me no courses fasting," said Guiscardo, doggedly, as he completely put his master into what might well be called an iron safe, by closing the bars of his helmet and lacing on his shield. "Sing on your song, sir master of mine; and should he interrupt us, I'll hit him on the vizor with a bolt that shall make his teeth chatter."

"Thou sayest well, Guiscardo. In truth, though I lack not courage, I have more stomach for the breast of that *mouton* that thou bearest behind thee, and which we will cook anon, than for a turn *à l'outrance*. So up goes my song, let the devil and the black knight take it as they list."

But the black knight, just then, seemed inclined to take nothing

amiss ; so, having reconnoitered the strangers, he quietly took himself back to his station before the tomb, with his lance couchant and his vizor down. His whole appearance was black as night ; there was nothing seen bright about him but the sharp steel-head of his spear, for his charger was as black as himself.

Sir Blondelin's way lying directly past where the black knight seemed thus standing in defiance, it was impossible for the latter not to hear the refrain of the white knight's song ; which, if unmusical before, was trebly harsh as it was grated through the bars of his helmet, to this effect :—

“ Whilst life shall to this frame endure,
I never will my faith resign !
The sex are fair, but still more pure,
O, Bellarosa ! Bella mine !
Thou and all thy sex are pure !”

Whilst Sir Blondelin was chanting out, *à pleine gorge*, this confession of faith—casting, however, sideways, all the time, a sheep's-eye at the terrible-looking black knight, and strenuously trying to appear very unconcerned—the dark warrior spurred forwards, and touching the plume of Sir Blondelin with the tip of his lance, roared out, “ Sir Knight, thou liest in thy throat !”

Sir Blondelin immediately reined up, wheeled round, and rode back a sufficient space to run a course at the assaulter. But Guiscardo, who fully expected something of the sort, was prepared for this crisis ; and not wishing his dinner delayed, or altogether lost, by such a foolish process and one so unsatisfactory as fighting, shot his bolt from his cross-bow, with an aim so good and a force so great, that he broke down two of the bars of the pugnacious knight's vizor, and gave him a very bloody mouth, which caused him to spit, hiss, and cough through his helmet in a very unknighly manner.

But Guiscardo, with the rueful countenance, was not to have the battle all his own way. Another unexpected combatant came upon the arena. As the black knight was, if we may use the expression, upon permanent duty, he had not trusted wholly to that Providence which cares for things so innocent as sparrows. He had, also, his squire with him and his provender ; and they had built themselves a little hut near the tomb, in which both master and servant were wont to retire during the night, and several times in the day also, in order to partake of needful refection. At the beginning of this affray, Rubert, the black knight's squire, was very commendably employed in preparing his own and his master's supper, by roasting about half a stone of swine's flesh before the fire, using his long narrow sword for a spit. Not being able readily to disengage the flesh from the sword, he sallied forth with the meat upon his weapon in one hand, and his shepherd's sling in the other. Seeing it was an assault of long shot, and whilst his mouth was watering at the relishing sight and savoury odour of the half-roasted pork, Guiscardo received a rounded pebble full on the side of his jaws that made them rattle like dice in a box. Thus, so far, the combat might be said to be even.

When the black knight had sufficiently cleared his mouth from

blood to enable him to speak distinctly, he began to curse and swear in a most unchivalrous manner at the white knight; who, forgetting the dignity of his golden spurs, was laughing now, as heartily as he was singing a little while before, at the grimaces of both the black knight and his own trusty squire.

"Sir knight—Sir buffoon!" stuttered and spluttered forth the black knight, "this ribaldry is very unseemly; and thou art dishonoured in permitting in thy presence a belted knight to be smitten by the hand of a villain: wherefore I challenge thee to mortal combat."

"Who art thou, thou dark man with the bloody mouth?" answered Sir Blondelin, assuming as much dignity as his broad face could express. "Sir Blondelin Blanchefoi wars not with unknown wanderers, and sings unquestioned his own roundelay."

This, certainly, was the countercheck quarrelsome, and was met more than half-way: but whilst this little affair is ripening so satisfactorily, we must say a few words on the proceedings of the subordinates. Guiscardo, when his sense of pain from the rude blow of the stone had a little abated, drew out his cross-bow and prepared himself for retaliation. But Rubert was on his guard. Twang went the string of the bow, and aside sprang Rubert. The bolts began to grow scarce; and as Guiscardo was mounted, and Rubert on foot, the former determined to trust no more to his missiles, but charge at once. Rubert, perceiving the wicked intention, retreated in good order, and gained the inside of the door of the hut at the moment when Guiscardo was barred all entry by the size of himself and horse taken together. Rubert, filling up the door-way with his sword pointed, with the pork still spitted upon it, they mutually sounded a parley. The roast pork was the most potent pacificator.

Guiscardo stood in much need of revenge, but more of luncheon; for dining to-day, seeing the bellicose state of the two principals, seemed very problematical: and as the hurt he had received was nothing very serious, by some secret understanding, in which there was but little waste of words, the two squires were amicably seated over the fire, each doing his best to complete the cooking of the pork, and tempering the heat by huge glasses of strong ale that Rubert very hospitably displayed.

We well know, that had our veracious romance been written in the usual style, not a word of all this would have transpired. The whole of this transaction would have been cavalierly dismissed in some such manner as this:—"The two trusty squires of the right valorous knights retired within the hut, in order to settle some important point on the law of the tournament," &c. &c.

Return we to our knights, who were too much heated with their own dispute to notice the termination of that of their squires. When Sir Blondelin had asked the name of the stranger, and had so courageously asserted his own right to sing his own song, he was thus fiercely replied to:—

"Sir Blondelin Blanchefoi, know that to me thou art not wholly unknown. I have heard of thy deeds of arms; albeit it has not yet been my fate to witness them. Also, know thou that I am called Sir Lugubricius Lollodine, or the Black Knight of Disappointment. I

have borne me gallantly both in the field and in the lists ; therefore fear thee not, Sir Blondelin ; but as the sun is setting, and as I scent the cooking of the meat, and am hungered exceedingly, I would gladly wash my mouth from this blood, and essay what damage hath befallen my dentals upon the provision that my squire hath doubtless prepared for me. I say this, sir knight, in no lack of courage ; for if after refection your mind hold to it, I will swinge thee soundly, and, by my halidome, I'll soil thy white plume in the dust, for a white plume my heart abideth not."

"Churlish and inhospitable knight !" replied Sir Blondelin ; "as thou invitest me not to thy board, I tell thee I defy thee, and that I scorn both thee and thy roast pork ; but nathless, that I may not take thee at advantage, I will await until thou hast washed away the inconvenience of thy wound ; and if thou faintest for lack of food, I will abide me here until thou art filled with thy swine's flesh. I war not on the wounded or the half-starved !"

"I thank thee for thy courtesy, though discourteously displayed," said the black knight. "What ho ! hilloa !—slave—Rubert—villain rascal—come forth, thou gormandizer !"

In order to beguile the time whilst Sir Lugubricius was volubly wording his kind invitation to his squire, Sir Blondelin struck up his old refrain—

"I never will my faith resign !
The sex are fair, but still more pure ;
O, Bellarosa ! Bella mine !
Thou and all thy sex are pure !"

At this the black knight, in his fury, forgetting his bloody mouth and the roasting pork, shouted out—

"False knight, thou liest ! All the sex are foul, and thy Bella Rosa is anybody's Bella that listeth."

"Have at thee, base calumniator ! I will thrust with my spear-head thy vile heresy down thy recreant throat."

By this time, they had each recovered a sufficient distance to give a full impetus to their onward charge, when Sir Blondelin, shouting out his battle-cry, "Bellarosa," and ejaculating, "Thou and all thy sex are pure," and the black knight shrieking out, "False as the fiends !" they met each other half-way in full career. But the two combatants were well versed in this mode of warfare. Each carried his lance with nervous and unswerving hand and level aim ; and each received his adversary's point full upon the centre of his shield. The white knight, however, being far the heavier man, and being also more heavily mounted, he thrust his opponent backwards well-nigh upon the crupper, the whole of the cumbrous saddle moving backwards with him, whilst Sir Blondelin received no other detriment but a cruel jar upon his right arm, which shook the bones of it up to his shoulder.

At the jar and noise of the conflict, the two trusty squires, as in duty bound, came out—we must say, rather unwillingly—from the hut, and, without mounting their respective steeds, took proper positions behind their masters. Sir Lugubricius, with the assistance of Rubert, having replaced his saddle and well tightened the girths, ran

another tilt against Sir Blondelin, after this wise:—seeing that he stood no chance in mere weight of metal with the white knight, who was crowing like a cock, and singing out jollily—

“Bellarosa! Bella mine!
Thou and all thy sex are pure!”

he, the black belligerent, when their lances were almost in contact, suddenly lifted his, and aimed a shrewd blow at his foe's headpiece, which, if it had taken effect, would very considerably have deranged his canticle. But he with the unmusical voice was not to be so easily taken at advantage, for, lifting up his lance to parry the thrust, the two weapons clashed together in the centre of their staves, and were both broken, and the knights passed each other in the course without further injury.

They drew their swords—of course they drew their swords—swords that were each of them christened by some magnificent name—and approaching each other, again began to hack and hew, and cut and thrust, till both of them were fairly out of breath, the two squires looking on with the most commendable air of unconcern that it is possible to conceive. Fruitless as this mutual hammering upon iron might seem, the bruises inflicted through it began to be felt, and some of the plates of the armour to give way, till at length blood began to ooze over the cuirasses, greaves, and cuisses of both combatants. At length, as if by consent, both came to a pause, and seemed, by their heavy breathing, to be seeking from this momentary cessation of hostilities renewed vigour to carry out their argument. Guiscardo, seizing this opportunity, plucked Rubert by the sleeve, and whispered him in the ear:—“Friend, as this promises to be a long passage of arms, which may be some time before it comes to a turning, take thee, friend, to thy legs, and look to the turning of the roast, for verily my heart yearneth towards it.”

The hint was not thrown away upon the careful Rubert, who, in the couching of a lance, vanished within the hut.

The combat was renewed; and it was evident that the ire was increased and the blood up in each party. They seemed no longer to fight merely to acquit themselves to their consciences. They vaulted on their saddles; they wheeled their horses; they looked out eagerly for fissures in each other's coats of mail, and thrust at them with mortal malignity. They were in earnest. Sir Blondelin had ceased to sing about his “Bella Rosa,” and Sir Lugubricius to shout out “The sex are false.” The cuts were no longer scratches; and the stabs no longer prickings. It was evident that, without some interference, the conflict would terminate fatally to one or both. Fortune treated these two foolish men much better than they deserved, and probably saved the lives of both.

Whilst each was meditating the *coup de grace* for his enemy, a blast was heard from some wind instrument, not quite so musical as the notes of a swine-herd's horn, but almost. Suddenly the conflict ceased, and a portly and majestic knight, attended by a well-equipped squire—the man who made the horrible noise—came riding proudly forward, and bade, as authoritatively as if he had been the king him-

self, or the king's sworn constable, that the battle should immediately cease, upon the pain of making the recusant his foe; at which communication both the squires of the combatants had many blissful anticipations of crackling and savoury morsels of fat and lean.

The stranger knight was a man of middle age, very well and completely armed in bright steel, chequered with blue and white. His plume consisted of feathers of the same colours mingled together. On his chequered shield was inscribed the motto, "*Pour la Gaieté*," which, being translated into our vernacular, signifies "Go it." As he looked strong, fresh, and vigorous, and like one who would not stand any nonsense, the two jaded combatants thought it very prudent to obey.

The stranger then commanded the knights to detail to him the cause of their quarrel. Now, as Sir Blondelin had been more for dining than fighting, he had nothing to complain of but that the black knight would not let him dine, but would make him fight, the task of detailing the cause of action very naturally fell upon Sir Lugubricius. At the suggestion of the stranger, who seemed intuitively to understand that Sir Lugubricius was prosy, he recommended them all to make themselves comfortable; very considerably remarking that, if their quarrel should happen to turn out to be irreconcilable, there would be a very fine full moon at nine o'clock, by which it might be decided *à l'outrance*, and that he would be happy to assist as umpire, and to bury the dead afterwards, whether it might happen to be one or both.

All parties found this proposition to be most reasonable; so they alighted. The two fighting-knights divested themselves of their armour, had their slight wounds dressed by their respective squires, and the horses being tethered among some rich grass, the three knights sat down lovingly on the greensward, whilst the three squires joined all their powers and provents, and formed a very desirable *coterie de cuisine*. In due time the *al fresco* and *impromptu* repast was served up, and very profoundly enjoyed. The wine was not forgotten; and, before twilight, three jollier knights were not to be found throughout the whole kingdom of Hungary.

When these excellent companions were just in that state to appreciate bad wine, and to call for more of it, the stranger knight, who had announced himself as Sir Florian Folleccœur, called upon the black knight to give some account of himself, and of the reasons that had induced him to seek the life of so pleasant a wine-bibber as bonny Sir Blondelin. Whereupon Sir Lugubricius made up a very penitential countenance; and, strengthening his mind and his voice with a huge draught of wine, spoke very nearly as follows:—

"Most noble knights, and most honourable companions,—You see before you the most wretched of human beings—the outcast and contempt of the whole human race—one whose daily food is misery, and whose only drink tears," (his misery had made him totally forget the pieces of mutton, pork, and German sausage which he had devoured, and the quarts of wine that he had unconsciously poured down his throat;) and all this solely imputable to the perfidy and faithlessness of the foul sex falsely called fair."

At this point of the speech, Sir Blondelin would have immediately given the traducer the lie, had not his mouth and throat been filled

with wine ; but he gulped the insult and the liquor down together, and, being really a good-natured fellow, suffered the traducer to proceed, merely bestowing upon him an emphatic shrug of his Herculean shoulders, and on himself another draught of liquid.

"That I speak within bounds," continued Sir Lugubricius, "both of you will allow when I relate to you my unhappy story. I loved, and I thought myself deeply, truly beloved, by a dame of high degree, —a princess, of course ; for what true knight would ever bestow his affections upon a lady of a lower degree?"

"None whatever," said both the listeners in chorus, whilst Sir Blondelin chimed in at the end with his favourite noise of—

"Oh, Bellarosa ! Bella mine !
Thou and all thy sex are pure !"

"Excepting she were a shepherdess," said Sir Florian, considerably correcting himself.

"Excepting she were a shepherdess, of course," said the other two knights ; and then Sir Lugubricius continued his story.

"This princess, whose name I am not yet at liberty to unfold, as a true, virtuous damosel errant, shared with me my toils, my board, and my travels, disguised, generally, as my page. What dangers with me has she not undergone ! what vows of fidelity has she not made to me !—but the dangers were shared, and the protestations were made in vain. She proved false—cruelly, infamously false. I surprised the deceiver in the arms of another. I slew him ; when, horror ! I beheld in the unsuspecting victim of her wiles my own, my only, my best-beloved friend. He alone was innocent—he knew not of the wrong that he was treacherously made to inflict upon me. He even confided his amour to me, for the perfidious woman used to meet him under a feigned name. She fled from my vengeance ; for, at the moment, I was so overwhelmed with grief, that I was sensible to nothing but that I was a murderer—a murderer of the best friend that ever stood gallantly by in the hour of danger and in the day of need.

"I have done all that remained for me to do. In that monument, shaded by those cypress trees, are contained the remains of my valued and ever-to-be-deplored friend ; whilst I have imposed upon myself, as a penance for my murder, a solemn vow, whilst this poor life is left to me, to maintain against all the world the universal falsehood of the sex."

"This is, of a truth, a doleful story, Sir Lugubricius," said the white knight ; "you are really much to be pitied, and you have my full permission to be as angry as you will with your light-o'-love : but I must not permit you, on that account, to think disrespectfully of my liege lady." And off he went at his old song :—

"Oh, Bellarosa ! Bella ! mine !
Thou and all thy sex are pure !"

At this outbreak, Sir Lugubricius began again to fume ; and the quarrel would certainly have been renewed but for the good-natured interference of Sir Florian, who observed that Sir Blondelin was quite

in the right; that the whole sex ought not to be outraged for the crime of one; and that he knew, from a most happy experience, that a lady could love, at once desperately and discreetly, devotedly and truly.

"Indeed," he continued, being a little elevated with the wine, and still more by a sense of his own excellence, "I may, without vanity, boast of possessing, solely and most enthusiastically, the love and favours of one of the most beautiful princesses in Christendom. Think not, Sir Knights, that she be frail; her fidelity to me, the purity of her unshaken faith, consecrate, and, as it were, turn into a virtue the one little error of her life." Then clasping his hands across his breast, and lifting up his eyes in the most approved of manner, he exclaimed, "Bounteous and just Heaven, pour down thy choicest gifts—envelope with thy sweetest blessings, as a reward for her loving constancy, Isabella of Aldegunda, a princess in her own right, and sovereign of my soul by the right of love!"

At the announcement of this name, Sir Blondelin sprang upon his legs, and with the rapidity of a flash of lightning unsheathing his sword, he rushed upon the astonished lover of the Princess Isabella of Aldegunda, furiously exclaiming—

"Liar! slanderer! perfidious defamer!—Coward! defend thyself! The virtuous lady that your irreverent lips have dared to defame is my own—my thrice virtuous love—my Bellarosa, Bella mine! I will die here, or any where, against any odds, in defence of her chastity!"

Sir Florian was not slow in answering this presumptuous challenge. Calling to his trusty squire for his trusty blade, it was not long before it was crossing the trusty blade of Sir Blondelin. Already had the two knights made some shrewd passes, and as many unexceptionable parries, when they mutually came to a pause by the extravagant behaviour of the black knight. This sombre gentleman, from whom not even the good cheer that he had been enjoying could extort a smile, now exploded with one of the most unsophisticated horse-laughs that ever shook the rude sides of an onion-crammed clown. It was this unconquerable laugh that had prevented him from sooner interfering to prevent this new duello. When, at length, he could find words, he exclaimed, in a very jovial manner:—

"My good friends, put up your swords. If you, Sir Blondelin, fight for the chastity of the fair Isabella, you will combat for that which has, young as she is, many years ceased to exist. This Lady Isabella of Aldegunda is my false mistress, who caused me so unfortunately to shed the blood of my friend, and to whose memory I have caused that marble monument to be erected in yonder cypress grove. It is in expiation of the murder committed through her falsehood and incontinence, that I have put myself on the penance of maintaining the inherent depravity of the sex; but I now see my folly—noble knights, see yours. Really, there is nothing to fight about. What, ho! ye idling squires! three more brimming goblets of the Greek wine! Let us, Sir Knights, pledge each other never more to take up a quarrel in behalf of that which none of us can ever know anything about."

At this sensible harangue the three squires, each with a broad grin

across his countenance, handed to their respective knights a bumper, which none of them refused; and draining the cups to the very bottom, they made the required pledge. They then, in a very amicable manner, each related his love-adventure with the lady; and they had the supreme satisfaction to find that they had all been treated alike.

The rest of the evening was passed in the most festive manner. The more wine that they drank, the more sensible they thought that they became; till, at length, they arrived at the philosophical conclusion of taking the world just as they found it, and enjoying as much of it, without examining things too narrowly, as they could. Thus they continued to moralise, drink, and sing through the twilight, until, as Sir Florian had predicted, the moon rose, and the heavy summer dews began to fall. They then discovered, that to sleep without some shelter would not be very healthful to their green wounds; and the two hurt knights appealed to Sir Florian, who had displayed so much wisdom about the moon's rising, if he could not give them some sage counsel as to their future proceedings. Being thus appealed to, he scratched his head with much gravity; by which thoughtful operation he remembered, that about a half of a league to the eastward there was a gentleman's château, which, though recently plundered by the Turks, had still very strong walls and good roofs remaining. Though deserted, it would afford them good shelter for the night, and thither they all determined to proceed. The arrangements were soon made, and the monument deserted by Sir Lugubricius with but little compunction.

The whole cavalcade of knights and squires rode merrily, though slowly, on through the blithe moonshine, talking, now by turns and now altogether, rather, we are sorry to confess, disadvantageously of the ladies. That they were egregiously in the wrong every one must confess; but as they had been individually so very unfortunate, we must not visit them with too much indignation.

At length the walls of their destined retreat appeared above the trees and shrubs of the delicious garden that surrounded them. Sir Florian assuring the rest of the party that the château was deserted, they went, in the first instance, to the stables; in which they and their squires having duly provided for the comfort of their horses, they proceeded, cautiously and silently, through the green walks and shaded avenues towards the house. They had not gone far when they perceived a light glimmering through the leaves of a fragrant arbour, and, upon approaching more near, they heard the soft murmur of voices.

Caution now became doubly necessary. The three knights stole up to the very place, and through the branches of the honeysuckle, jasmine, and arbutus, they beheld a gallant, handsome, and magnificently attired Turk kneeling at the feet of the incomparable Princess Isabella of Aldegunda! Ardent were the Mussulman's expressions of gratitude—fervent his protestations of constancy and love. He swore, more than once, by the Prophet, that she was the incomparable paragon of fidelity.

When our three cavaliers had sufficiently enjoyed this scene, they rushed in upon the entranced lovers, and seizing the Turk, brought

him out upon the lawn, and, for the want of a blanket, gave him a most limb-shaking tossing in his own shawl. During this operation of involuntary vaulting, the constant Isabella began reviling, in the most outrageous manner, the poor believer in Mahomet; and between whiles endeavouring, in turn, to recommend herself to one of her former lovers. These, after they had nearly shaken the life out of the unfortunate infidel, gave both him and the lady, without deigning to notice the latter with a single word, in charge to their squires, commanding them to keep them apart, and close prisoners in the loft of the stables, until the morrow, when they purposed to conduct them to the Austrian camp.

The three knights then went and flung themselves on the floor in their cloaks, and in a short time they were all apparently in a sound sleep. A little after one, Sir Lugubricius arose and stole softly out; who was followed by Sir Florian, who was followed by Sir Blondelin. With a unanimity most marvellous, they all repaired to the stables. What they really wished to do there, it is impossible to say; but this is certain, they all averred that they went to see whether the trusty squires could be trusted with the prisoners. It appears that they could not, or at least one of them; for a full hour before the knights arrived, the prisoners had bribed the most trusty one of the squires, and were now many miles upon their way to the Turkish frontiers, taking with them the three knights' horses and the well-beloved squire of Sir Blondelin, the hungry Guiscardo, as their attendant.

In this unfortunate case there was very little to be done, and a great deal to be said: what they did we shall not recount, and what they said we shall not relate, further than this,—that they all afterwards grew very sensible men indeed for knights-errant, and never after placed their affections upon ladies who rode about as errant damosels from camp to castle, and from castle to camp, although they might be born princesses, and were as beautiful as Isabella of Aldegunda.

THE WOMAN HATER.

No. III.

BY WARNER OLIPHANT.

THE COUNTESS AND HER FRIENDS.

" Wonder it is to see in divers mindes,
How diversely Love doth his pageaunts play."
SPENSER'S FAERIE QUEENE.

MY dear Cecil, you shall not now have to murmur at my indulging too much in the tragic vein; the present reminiscence is scarcely more than an anecdote, but, short though it is, I hope you may find it worth a smile. When I went abroad, the hope of enjoying the society of an old college friend, Ned Hayleigh, with whom I had long been on terms of the most confidential intercourse, induced me to go forthwith to Milan. Had I reflected on his confirmed social habits, some hesitation might have delayed this step; I should have remembered that wheresoever Ned Hayleigh was, there was no room for the indulgence of moody humours, since he was an infallible attractor of all the merry spirits like himself that came within his sphere, and one was certain to find him the centre of as riotous a group as ever gave food for the police sheet of Bow Street office, or trouble to the panting proctors of our Alma Mater. As it proved, however, my seeking him was the wisest course that could possibly have been adopted, for under the very worst circumstances high spirits are more or less contagious, and the melancholy that might have nursed itself into madness, frequently gives way before the exhilarating influence of surrounding mirth. Poor Ned! a finer fellow never breathed; he would have dared earth and sea to serve a friend, and so well was his warm nature appreciated, that his friends would, one and all, have done their utmost to serve him in turn. He was drowned some years after in Norway, and there lies his dust.

"Noll, my dear boy," said he, when I joined him, "you are as welcome as if you brought news of a legacy. Sit down here, old fellow. Dined, I suppose? Sullivan, shove round the bottle. Grimmett, bring glasses. Sullivan, Jack Forby, Macneil, Wilson—my friend Warner Oliphant."

This brief introduction paved the way to a delightful addition to my circle of acquaintance. Forby had been our cotemporary at St. John's; Major Sullivan was a stranger, but I had known his brother; Macneil and Wilson were new faces, but being very young, very merry, and very good-natured, were familiar at once, and intimates in an hour.

"We are to adjourn to the *la Scala*," said Macneil, a young Scotch *laird*; "are you inclined to join us? You will hear the finest singing in Italy to-night, if Hayleigh permits you to listen."

"Very true," said Major Sullivan. "Velluti was in magnificent voice at rehearsal, though I prophesy that this "*Aureliano*" will disappoint the hopes of its stripling composer. The thing will be a failure, unless that wonderful voice, with its incomparable power and execution, avails to save it. However, with Velluti you do not risk a disappointment."

"And as all the world will be there," said Wilson, "you can have a catalogue with notes and illustrations of all the mentionables in Milan. It will be a vast saving of time to you in that preliminary branch of your education."

"I shall be delighted to visit a theatre which has the credit of being the first in the world. Let me finish my glass of claret, and I am much at your service."

After a few minutes' further conversation we rose to go. "Ned," I heard Sullivan say, "you know it is quite against rule to allow your friend to sit with us; that is, in the Society's box at least."

"Nonsense! I'll be his surety that he joins us in a week," said Hayleigh.

"In that case we may for once break the rule," said Sullivan. "The fact is," he added, turning to me, "the *Amici*, a society to which we all belong but you, has a box at *la Scala*; and we have agreed to suspend our rule against the admission of strangers in your favour; Hayleigh here will explain the somewhat unusual method of gaining admittance, should you desire to become one of us."

In half an hour we were all seated in the theatre, enjoying the second act of Rossini's *Aureliano*, and surveying the varied and numerous audience. There was only one person in our box besides our own party; he was a young man who seemed to take very little interest in the opera, and a great deal in a box on the same tier as ours, but the opposite side. I concluded he was one of the *Amici*.

"Pray, Oliphant," said Ned, "where did you pick up that funeral aspect? You are not dressed in mourning, or I should fancy your grand-aunt had died. 'Where gottest thou that goose look?'"

"Do not ask me now; you shall hear the story soon, and a fearful one it is. But come, tell me how one is admitted to the privileges of this society; I have serious thoughts of becoming a member. Are you any relations to the 'Arcadians,' or the 'Oziosi,' or the 'Umidi?'"

"None in the least, except that our title, like those of the fantastic corporations you name, embodies a joke. Look across the theatre—there—in a line with the chandelier—and tell me what you see."

"I see a very beautiful girl, of diminutive figure, sitting alone, and stealing frequent glances at this side—to this very box."

"No wonder," said Ned, "for she is the patroness of the *Amici*."

"That is the Countess V.," said Macneil, "a rich widow of a poor Italian count, aged nineteen in years, but twice nineteen in cunning. She is an English girl, and her father kept a fruit-shop in the Strand. She travelled in Italy after his death, and met Count V., who fell in love with her to distraction; if she did not love him, she

was delighted with his title, and her mother, captivated with his moustache, gave consent to a marriage. At seventeen she was a bride, at eighteen a widow, and now all the English in Milan seem anxious to make her a bride at nineteen."

"But what has this history to do with the *Amici*?" I inquired.

"Wait a little," proceeded Macneil. "She is said to have killed the count; for, the little creature being so selfish that to love any one but herself is an impossibility, he grew miserable at finding his raptures unrequited, pined to a shadow and a fever, which he caught at Rome, made him an easy prey. Her fortune is very large, but there is no chance of her lavishing it on any one who cannot give her an English title in return."

"But what has this, I ask again, to do with the *Amici*?"

"Why this," said Sullivan; "that all the members of this our band of friends are declared lovers of the Countess V."

"I should rather have expected to find you disposed to cut each other's throats, than to go shares in an opera-box," returned I.

"A reasonable expectation enough," said Ned; "but the truth is, not one of us cares the value of an opera-ticket about her, nor she about us; so we wisely make common cause of it, and laugh at the little woman in unison."

"Then you call yourselves *the Friends*, from no other reason than that you are *the Rivals*. Is it so?"

"No; you do not quite catch the yoke," said Macneil. "When I came to Milan, long before Ned Hayleigh and the rest, I met the fair countess, and fell, to confess the truth, in love with her—real *bonâ fide* love."

"To which the attractions of her fifty thousand pounds in the three per cents did not add one jot," said Sullivan.

"No more they did, for I knew nothing of her fortune. Now she gave me every sort of encouragement—squeezed my hand when we parted—spouted sentiment like a strolling player—told me of her likes and dislikes—cautioned me against this woman and that—made anxious inquiries about my prospects—invited me to her *bijou* of a house; and by so doing, effectually turned my head."

"What did the woman mean?" said I.

"Perhaps she meant to have some one to wait upon her, to pelt her with compliments on fine eyes and ankles; perhaps—"

"Perhaps," broke in Sullivan, "she took a Scotch *laird* for a real live lord, and when your friends called you Strathgowan, she thought you heir apparent to a Scotch peerage."

"Very true," said Macneil; "the little creature is mad upon titles and acres. She would sell herself to old Nick, if he were introduced to her as the Duke of Tartarus. However, I made love to her, and offered myself; she held up her little hands with affected surprise, vowed and protested she had no suspicion of such a thing, and gave me to understand that any return of my affection was out of the question. Though this was rather startling by way of catastrophe to one's first love, I had sense enough left to see that at any rate I was well out of her clutches; I made no comment, but briefly informed her of my intention of leaving Milan. 'Why leave Milan?' said my

countess, 'I shall always be most happy to know you as a friend, and in that view there is no one I would so highly esteem.' A man in love is rather vulnerable to civil speeches, and a few reiterations of this made me promise to remain; if I could not be her husband—and perhaps some high principle, remorse, or affection for her departed lord, stood in the way—it was something to be her friend, the friend of such a woman—yes, I would remain."

"Go on," said I, impatient to see the drift of the story.

"Soon after I met Sullivan. We talked about the Countess V.; and at last I took him into my confidence, told him of my love and its issue, and how I was the firmest and *chosen* friend of the woman I adored, but could not marry. The major laughed heartily, and disconcerted me not a little. 'Forgive my rudeness, but the fact is, that your story is the exact counterpart of what occurred to me, and I too am the *most* esteemed of the countess among her friends.' This was startling, but it was exactly true; so I echoed the laugh, though it turned somewhat against myself. Wilson here joined our circle, and the major one day made a bet of a hundred that, if he proposed, the result would be the same."

"And lost," said I, "for the credit of poor human nature."

"No, by Jove! I won," said Sullivan, "and might have done so in half a dozen other cases, but one does not like to take advantage of moral certainties."

"Well," said Macneil, "we learnt to enjoy the thing, and set on two or three other fellows to become her friends. At last Sullivan proposed that we should form a club, to be called the *Amici*, no one to be permitted the privileges of membership until he had made love to the countess, and been nominated by her the most esteemed of her friends."

"So then, you have your name, not by virtue of being friends to each other, but to the Countess V.?"

"Exactly," answered Macneil; "and now what do you think of the lady?"

"That a woman who can desire to be surrounded closely by men who have longed for her as a wife, is just little better than——"

"Than our worthy patroness," chimed in Ned Hayleigh. "Don't croak, Noll; you hardly appreciate the dear creature yet. There are women so fond of admiration that they cannot bear to part with an adorer, and to whom it would be death to see the discarded one swell the train of another fair; yet so conceitedly selfish, that they would never bestow purse and person on one who is not able to give them more than an equivalent—such is our countess. As for love, you might as well expect love from a drumstick."

"But does she not find out you are laughing at her?" I inquired.

"You do not know how blind one may become through vanity," said the major. "She thinks we are all dying for her still, whilst in truth we are only dying of laughter. Did you remark the man who sat in this box when we came in? he is now at her side."

I looked up, and saw him conversing earnestly with the lady opposite.

"That is Lord Mildworth; he insists on endeavouring to become a member, yet I feel convinced that if he proposes she will accept him at once, without a single hint about friendship. She knows he will be an earl one day soon."

"And now," said Hayleigh, "that you understand the constitution of our society, will you become a member? You know I have become your surety, and if not, shall forfeit my recognizances."

"The proposal is somewhat novel," answered I; "but she must be worth knowing at least, for the rarity of the thing; so introduce me to-night, and you shall have my answer in the morning."

"Agreed," said Ned. "Here, Sullivan!—Sullivan is master of the ceremonies by right of seniority—take him round, and do the proper."

As we entered the countess's box, Lord Mildworth was just quitting it. I was introduced by Sullivan, who remained for a time, and then lounged away. Now that I had a nearer view of the heroine of my sketch, and patroness of the society, I could not help confessing that it was no wonder men should be fooled and enslaved by one so charming. She was of fair complexion, contrasting well with the blackest of bright eyes; her hair, braided back, showed the contour of a face to which nothing could be objected. Her figure was admirable, but very diminutive; if one had thought of her at one's fireside, it would have been as an ornament to one's chimney-piece, not to one's chimney corner. Nor was her conversation inferior to her appearance; under a light and sparkling manner she concealed attainments by no means inconsiderable. Her criticisms on music and musicians struck me as, for a woman, quite wonderful; and as she now and then trilled part of an air, to remind me of some opera we were speaking of, which I had forgotten, I could clearly see that her taste and voice were highly cultivated. O woman! woman! if such an outside could cloke a coarse and selfish mind, what shall save men from being deceived and betrayed? All love is a lottery; and the prizes of our hopeful boyhood prove blanks to our manly age. The first indication of something insincere in this beautiful specimen of nature's workmanship was afforded by her *theatrical* manner, that is, by a straining after effect in every word she uttered, ay, even in every position she assumed. Like most vain women too (for *men* sometimes succeed in concealing vanity) she was ever and anon endeavouring to make the conversation turn upon herself, and though this was often adroitly effected, it was not so invariably. But these traits might have passed unnoticed if I had not been prepared for watchfulness by the communicative disclosures of the *Amici*. Before the end of the evening we were making love; talking of Petrarch as if she had been a Laura, and I her lover. As I handed her into her English carriage, she invited me to visit her next day.

Not to weary you—in a week I found I had prosecuted my sham suit so ardently, that all was ripe for what Hayleigh termed my nomination. I had some qualms of conscience at acting a falsehood, even with one whose own creed was so unscrupulous, but these I silenced by the argument that I was contributing to the well-earned punishment of a heartless and cruel woman. In short, the declaration of

love was made, and received exactly in the usual form ; I was rejected, but consoled by a proffer of friendship to any amount. What can such women mean by friendship ? What conception can they form of the word they so constantly profane ? Friendship proper dares death, and scorns labour, for the sake of those it has chosen ; and such friendship I have witnessed, and can understand. But compare with this the friendship such creatures as the Countess V. have to offer : it is as like the true as Punch is to Hercules.

We knew we had the power of frightening our heroine out of Milan any moment we chose, and as power is often more delightful in *posse* than in *esse*—the consciousness than the exercise—we could scarcely make up our minds to do so. If it had not been for Lord Mildworth, who was to be the next candidate, it is hard to say how long our *Società degli Amici* might have gone on increasing ; but he brought the matter to a hurried close. Much struck both with the person and intellectual gifts of the lady, Mildworth entered upon the joke with eagerness and delight ; he was in fact a little in love, however he might affirm the contrary. But, a confirmed aristocrat, he had no thoughts of marrying a fruiterer's daughter ; and, a man of sound sense, he would have spurned the idea of an union with one who showed such a fondness for being conspicuous, and who was already the laughing-stock of all his acquaintance. Now Major Sullivan was right in his belief that Mildworth had only to ask her hand to obtain it ; she had resolved from the first to secure him if possible, and it was the proudest moment of her life that saw him at her feet. On this chance, strange to say, his thoughtless lordship had never calculated, and when he heard a soft and simpered consent to his solicitations, nothing could exceed his surprise, except his embarrassment. The Countess V. must have thought him a gawky lover, for instead of receiving her gentle confession by pressing her incomparable hand to his licensed lips, and whatever else accepted suitors do, he sat on his chair in dumb amaze, revolving in his mind the best means of escape and emancipation ; he was what your friend Tollett would call "planted." Invention refused to befriend him ; and at last, in utter despair, he pressed her hand, gave his forehead a couple of slaps, and rushed from the room, the beautiful Agnes being left in the belief that her last new worshipper was afflicted with temporary derangement.

Peals of laughter saluted Mildworth when he told us his story. Never was description more vivid, never one more applauded, than his of his discomfiture ; and his distress was as real at his acceptance, as any other lover's could have been who had undergone the pains of rejection.

"If she find you as cold every day," said Sullivan, "she will be forced to own she is beaten at her own weapons."

"O, never fear," gasped Hayleigh, just recovering from a convulsion, "'Lord Angelo is precise, stands at a guard with envy, scarce confesses that his blood flows, or that his appetite is more to flesh than stone ;' but these cold gentlemen have a good deal of earnestness on occasion. It will be a match yet."

"Come now, confess," said Wilson; "you did kiss her, did you not?"

"Upon my soul, no!" said Mildworth, with an eagerness that renewed our laughter.

"Since the days of Adonis, never was such forbearance!" replied Wilson.

"There will infallibly be work for the lawyers," pursued Major Sullivan. "'Breach of promise of marriage. The Countess V. *versus* John Lord Mildworth. This was an action, &c.; verdict, damages 10,000*l*.'"

"A truce with all this," said Mildworth, somewhat annoyed. "How am I to get out of the unlucky scrape? I would rather make love to all Milan than that this single affair should get wind."

"If I had not seen how all might be satisfactorily terminated," returned Sullivan, "I for one should not have laughed. But the thing is easy. Wilson is a beautiful draughtsman, and conceived the idea from a volume he has seen, called *Julia's Garland*, which some amorous French duke prepared for his mistress as a love-offering—a plan for showing the countess how well we know her. He has drawn all our pictures, seven in number—yours will make eight—and caused them to be bound in a handsome volume, containing the rules of our little society, set forth in all the pride of caligraphy. This we mean to inscribe 'Friendship's Gift,' and to present to her ladyship: if you wish it, as I and Oliphant sup with her, it shall be done to-night. Depend upon it she will see how ridiculous she has become, and Milan will be too hot to hold her. If you wish to follow her, well and good; if not, I warrant you see her no more."

"Follow her! I would as soon think of a pilgrimage to Mecca."

Never shall I forget that night. Sullivan took out the volume from its silken envelope, and promptly handed it to the unsuspecting countess, informing her at the same time that it was the joint gift of her English friends in Milan.

"You men are so vain," she remarked; "who would have thought of your giving me your own pictures? Here is a blank border—whose picture is that to contain?"

"Lord Mildworth's. If you will glance through the volume, you will find that none have been admitted but such as have an excuse for this vanity, in having received your own assurance of the highest friendly regard. Those pictures form the gallery of a society created by your ladyship, the rules of which are set forth in the beginning of the volume."

I saw her, as she read, look bewildered, turn pale, drop the volume, and approach Sullivan as if she meant to strike him; but her rage gave way to mortification and shame, and she sank on an ottoman in violent hysterics. Major Sullivan was cool, as I thought unfeelingly so, for the poor victim seemed alarmingly ill.

"Ring the bell, Oliphant, and let us decamp." However, I persisted in remaining until her attendants came, and she was pronounced somewhat better. It was the last time I saw the Countess V. in Milan; she went, as we predicted, at daybreak the next morning. Sullivan keeps the volume of miniatures as a great curiosity.

This prank was only one of many played by the *Società degli Amici*, which was not broken up by the loss of its patroness, but continued to fulfil its functions for several months. It then died a violent death by dismemberment, not "regretted by all who knew it," for the police of Milan had begun to look on our noisy freaks as not a little disagreeable. Some went north, some south; some sought their homes, and some cared not if they never saw home; and since that time deaths and changes have rendered it certain that on this earth we shall meet no more.

I went to Rome—a city which no young man but must desire to visit—one of the first faces I saw there was that of the little countess: she seemed determined not to recognize me, but I forced her to a nod. As my mode of thinking, now that I was alone, was different from that which contact with Ned Hayleigh and Sullivan inspired, I determined to set her at ease about our former intercourse, and its disagreeable reminiscences. I approached, and found her almost in tears.

"Can the Countess V. forgive me, and permit me to forget that we have met before?"

"You cruel, cowardly creature! Will you promise to forget really? There is my hand," she replied. I was struck with her good-nature, and underwent a pang for my practical joke, though I still felt it was no more than an act of justice. We glided into a conversation on art and artists; and she was as much at home on painting as I had formerly found her on music. An English painter had just put forth a valuable book on art, which she had not read; I had, for it chanced to form one of the last batch I had received from London. To offer a perusal of it to one so competent to appreciate its value was but natural; it procured me in return an invitation to dinner on the following day. But the book was never read, nor the dinner eaten. I returned home, and sought out the volume; and, as my evil star ordained it, it occurred to me to send another parcel of books, still unopened, which my servant at that moment laid on my table, in which I thought the countess might find something worth glancing at. I was terribly sleepy, so I cut the string, broke the seals, but never glanced at the contents; enclosing them all in the parcel containing the work on painting. As I yawned my way to bed, I left orders for the disposal of the books in the morning. Whilst I was at breakfast, every volume was returned, and therewith a note from my heroine, regretting that she could not receive me at dinner. The parcel was torn open in an instant, and it explained all. Twenty-nine numbers of a periodical published some years before, at Penrith in Cumberland I think, called *the Friend*, was the first item; and the next—could chance have used me more vexatiously?—was a couple of copies of a book of verses, privately printed for gratuitous distribution by an old companion, and bearing the applicable but ill-omened title of *Friendship's Gift*. I looked no farther, but dashed the books on the floor: and from that day to this have never seen the pretty, but vain and selfish countess.

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D.D.

The palace of the bishop of Guastalla was in the main square of the town, opposite to the municipal hall. One of our friends was left to take care of the carriages, and to order fresh horses; the rest, in a body, proceeded to the assault. It was nearly three o'clock in the afternoon, and the servants were taking their meal in the lower apartments, their master having just risen from the table. We found no porter in the hall, and as, according to the usage of the country, the door was wide open, we left our sentinels at the most important posts, and ascended the lofty staircase. The main body of my little troop was now reduced to three persons, but these were the very men I most implicitly trusted—D'Escrivan, the doctor, and Rodani. We rang the bell at the door of the state apartment, and were somewhat surprised at the long and solemn silence that followed our summons. Finally the door was thrown open, and a young, fair, and blooming little priest or *abate* very civilly asked our business.

"My uncle is taking his afternoon's siesta, I believe," answered the youth to our inquiries; "but if you will favour me with your names, I will bring your message."

"Nay, we'll bring our message ourselves," said I; and, according to our preconcerted plan, we all fell upon him, gagged and bound him with our pocket handkerchiefs, and consigned him to the custody of our friend Rodani.

This being done, we proceeded warily from one to the other of the dark, gloomy rooms, till we arrived at the door of a little library.

"Come in," said a soft, mellow voice, as we knocked at the door, and instantly we rushed into the bishop's presence. D'Escrivan entered first. He held his drawn dagger in his hand. His pale but dark countenance was overshadowed by a fanciful black velvet cap, that gave his naturally bold and fierce look something more over-awing and threatening. Caluga, who followed next, was an ugly customer enough, and the pistol which he drew from under his cloak as he entered, and held at arm's length before him, was not calculated to improve his appearance. I entered last, and unarmed.

The bishop was not at his siesta, as his nephew imagined, but busy at his writing-desk—most probably reading his breviary—when his unwelcome guests unceremoniously intruded upon him. He was wrapped in a long, flowing, black gown, but was otherwise dressed in all the attire suited to his rank. He was now, perhaps, in his fortieth year, but looked still youthful and vigorous, and, as far as physical strength was concerned, he was more than a match for any two of us. His complexion was fair and rich, and there was between him and his young nephew a family likeness that could not easily be mistaken.

The bishop very naturally imagined that no one but his boy asked for admittance, and he addressed us in German, but, startled by the noise of our footsteps, he turned round, and, jumping up from his seat, he uttered a piercing shriek, and gave himself up for lost.

The poor prelate's first impression was, that a gang of assassins had broken in upon him to murder him in his study. The sight of a naked stiletto has something appalling in the sight of a man of the North, who associates with it all his ideas of Italian treachery, cunning, and cowardice. Whether these blemishes are necessarily attached to the character of our people, this is not the most opportune time to discuss; but it could hardly be denied that the populace at Genoa, Rome, and Naples, have been and are more familiar with the use of their knives than either the English or Germans. Whether their partiality for that weapon necessarily implies baseness and perfidy, is altogether a different question. Our artizans and mechanics learned to carry such weapons in times of civil anarchy and oppression, when every one who wore the dress and character of a gentleman was entitled by the laws and usages of the land to carry a sword, which gave him an advantage over the unarmed citizen, and inspired him with an arrogance and insolence to which even our lowest classes, true to their republican reminiscences, were unwilling to submit. The dagger was, therefore, assumed in opposition to the sword, and so far it would be unjust to contend that there was anything dishonest or ungenerous in it. Those who have seen, in the Trastevere at Rome, or in the Porto Franco at Genoa, two of our *facchini* falling upon each other with their clasp-knives, must confess that it is certainly a tremendous, but by no means an unfair play. Nor is a duel between two Mississippians, with their bowie knives, a more treasonable deed than one between two Englishmen with pistols, though both may be equally illegal and unchristian. The poniard has been, no doubt, and may be, used as a fit instrument for assassination; but cannot the same be said of swords, pistols, and every other weapon? Has not the life of Louis Philippe again and again been attempted, without once having recourse to that obnoxious organ of destruction?

Whatever may be said or thought about the subject, certain it is that the bishop of Guastalla, as a good German, was unmanned at once, at the first glimmering of the naked blade that D'Escrivan held in his hand. His very terror nearly cost him his life; for as, overwhelmed by his sudden surprise, after having raised his arms above his head, he threw them both on his table for support, my friends, thinking that he stooped to seize some weapon that might lie before him, rushed upon him, anxious to overcome all resistance.

The truth, however, soon shone with full evidence, and the cadaverous paleness that soon spread over the face of our victim, the cold drops that stood on his forehead, and the shiverings that pervaded his limbs, soon made us understand that no violence would be required, and that the prelate was already helplessly in our power.

The hope of bending him to our desires by a little fright did, in fact, enter into our plan; and we had good reason to expect that, glad to escape from what he considered immediate destruction, he would soon follow us in resignation and silence.

"Spare me, for God's sake, spare an innocent man!" ejaculated the wretched priest, with an indifferent Italian accent, convulsively grasping the hand that held the dagger. The pistol, that could have scattered his brains at one blow, inspired him with no fear.

"In the name of the law, you are our prisoner," roared the doctor in a voice of storm.

"You have nothing to fear from us, my lord bishop," said I, in my softest tone. "Follow us without resistance, and no harm will befall you. The provisional government want to see you."

"Ye—ee—es," muttered his eminence, not greatly reassured; then suddenly raising his voice in a paroxysm of despair—"I am innocent, I am innocent," said he—"why, in God's name—why would you murder me?"

His shrieks went through my heart, and I wished with all my powers never to have embarked in an enterprise in which my nerves were to be put to such an ordeal of pain. Fortunately for us all, Caluga threw the skirt of his cloak on the prelate's face, and succeeded in stifling his cries.

"Hush if you care for life," I then urged. "No one wishes to twist a hair of your head. You must ride to Parma with us. Such are our orders; but we are also enjoined to treat you with the utmost respect. Your eminence is perfectly safe with us, unless you drive us to the most unpleasant extremes. It is in vain you would hope to rouse your servants, or any other man, to your rescue; were even all Germany to start forward in your defence, you will never escape alive from our hands. One more—only one more—of those shrieks, and, by the living God, we plunge our daggers in your bosom—self-defence will compel us."

The bishop listened and was dumb. He was a reasonable being, and perceiving the uselessness of resistance, and somewhat reassured as to our intentions, he begged to be ungagged, and offered to follow us without further opposition.

My attendants stripped him of his dressing-gown; D'Escrivan helped him to his coat, which was carelessly thrown astride a chair. Caluga quashed his triangular hat on the bishop's head. I offered my arm to him with cavalier gallantry, and we went to the door.

"Let the young gentleman follow us too," said I to Rodani, who had been left to take care of the bishop's nephew. "Perhaps his eminence will be glad to have a trusty companion with him by the way."

We descended the staircase. No alarm had been given. We found our sentinels where we had left them. One of our companions, a provident fellow, had taken care to shut the kitchen door outside, so that, had even the reverend's servants heard of their master's misfortune, they would actually have been prevented from interfering in his behalf. Just as we reached the hall, the postilions were driving up to the door. The steps were let down, and the bishop was forced up into his seat. We jumped in after him, and the door was shut.

The sight of two carriages, each drawn by four post-horses, and calling first at the town-hall, then at the episcopal palace, looked too much like an extraordinary event not to call upon us the attention of the good burghers of Guastalla. A few hundred of them were therefore assembled around us, wondering and questioning each other, but completely unable to divine the meaning of what was taking place before their eyes.

The bishop saw his advantage, and tried to avail himself of the opportunity. The open air, the presence of the townsmen of his own

diocese, restored his usual spirits. He made a sudden effort to escape from the doctor's gripe, and cried out with all his might, "My friends, my good friends!—will you suffer your bishop to be slain before your eyes? Help! Help! I am in the hands of ruffians who are going to murder me!"

The people drew up tumultuously. Our friends raised themselves up in their seats, threw back their cloaks, and cocking the blunderbusses or pistols, which they had hitherto hidden under their garments, turned their muzzles against their assailants. The good people of Guastalla drew back.

"Citizens of Guastalla," cried I, for since my harangue from the balcony at Parma, I had conceived some relish for the eloquence of the forum, "beware how you interfere with us! We are agents of government, and you will gain nothing by thwarting us in the discharge of our duties. There has been a battle between our people and the Austrians at Fiorenzola. We have lost a few prisoners, and must have hostages to secure their lives. This, who calls himself your bishop, is only an Austrian, the minion of the profligate woman that has reigned too long over us. Henceforth you shall have no bishop but what you choose for yourselves, and ——"

The audience listened in wonder and perplexity. Discordant cries arose from the motley crowd, and it would have been difficult in the longrun to foresee whether my words, or their bishop's cries, or the dread of our fire-arms, might have the most powerful influence on their minds. But whilst they kept at some distance, tumultuously deliberating, our postilions threw themselves on their saddles, cracked their whips, and left the gaping crowd still amazed and astounded behind.

As we rode past the town-hall I descried the goodly form of the mayor, who was looking down from the balcony, also rapt in stupendous astonishment, no doubt scarcely believing that our abduction of one of the great dignitaries of the church could thus take place in full daylight, before so many witnesses, and with scarcely a shade of opposition. I waved my hand towards him with a look of triumph, and wished him a very good appetite for his tripe—(turtle is not familiar among Italian aldermen.)

Two hours afterwards we were at the gates of Parma, where a large crowd was assembled, waiting for the result of our expedition.

"Have you got him?" cried the multitude.

"Have we? ay, marry, we have; d'ye think we would ride so far to no purpose?" was our reply.

"Evviva!" shouted the sovereign mob. "Death to the *Black Bird*! Death to the *Jackdaw*!"

Black bird and jackdaw are the by-words at Parma to express hatred and contempt towards the priesthood, evidently an allusion to the sable colour of their robes.

The poor prelate sank back in his seat, for he took those idle shouts *au pied de la lettre*, and expected every moment to be stoned to death, or torn to pieces by the exasperated rabble.

"Mind them not, your eminence," said I. "These dogs never bite when they bark. You know our town's-people; you know our neighbour's proverb about us,

"Parmigiani
Larghi di bocche e stretti di mani."

A current phrase among the people of the rival cities of the neighbourhood, intended to reflect disgrace upon the character of the good Parmese, as being more prone to make use of their tongues than their hands.

"You are as safe here as you ever were at the court of Schœnbrunn."

His eminence sighed deeply. The carriage proceeded, though with considerable difficulty, along the thronged streets, till we landed before the palace of our provisional government.

I jumped from my seat, and made my way up to the council chambers.

"My lords, here comes your prisoner. Will you please to let us have your dispositions about him?"

"Prisoner!" exclaimed Count Carmagnola, with an affected air of surprise. "Is it then true? Have our youth indeed dared to carry their threat into execution? Do you mean the Bishop of Guastalla?"

"The same prelate, my lord. But if this has been done without your order or consent, why, the horses are still tied to the carriages, and we can drive him back as easily as we drove him hither."

"Come, come, count," interposed Da Costa with his usual frankness; "order or no order, the priest is here, and must not escape so cheaply. De Negri, thou art a clever and handy *sbirro*, and we have to thank thee for thy pains. Take that black raven to the Hôtel de la Poste, which we have destined for his prison; we will set a few of our smart lads as a body-guard about him, and ere evening I will myself have the honour of a *tête-à-tête* with thy prisoner."

We drove round to the hotel. The bishop was shown up to the best apartment. We stationed ourselves at the door, and by dint of persuasion dispersed the assembled mob. Presently a detachment of national guards came to relieve us, and we were free for the night.

Da Costa closeted himself with the bishop, and, strong in his commanding and forbidding countenance, availing himself of the terror and consternation in which our prisoner had been thrown by the events of the day, brought him passively and completely under his control.

His eminence wrote to his lady and mistress, quondam his penitent, Maria Louisa, stating how he had fallen into the hands of lawless rebels and merciless anarchists; that it was only owing to a miracle of Heaven if he had hitherto escaped assassination and violence; and ended by supplicating her to use her prisoners with discretion and humanity, as long at least as his head was there to answer for the consequences. This letter, carefully revised, duly folded and sealed, was immediately sent by express to its destination.

CHAPTER XVI.

Doubts and Misgivings.

"Le cose della Guerra andavan zoppe."

I REMEMBER to have been told—the tale is rather free, but there is sound moral at the bottom of it,—of a jolly middle-aged gentleman,

to whose care a young buxom widow was intrusted during part of her continental tour. They arrived one evening, and were obliged to put up at a wretched-looking inn on the Pyrenees, which boasted only of one bedroom for the accommodation of strangers. Of that apartment the lady, of course, took immediate possession, and her gallant escort was to pass the night on one of the hard benches in the kitchen of the dingy posada.

It was in the heart of winter. Their supper had been cold and unsubstantial; the fire waxed faint and low; the mountain-wind howled dismally through the crannies of that shattered abode, and altogether there was every prospect of a cheerless night.

Our fair traveller was tender and compassionate, as widows proverbially are. Her cavalier had during their journey proved a faithful, attentive, agreeable companion. The posadero and his family had retired for the night, and they were alone, crouching to the fading embers, close to each other. It was a trying moment. Trembling with cold as much as with the violence of his emotions, the gentleman sued, begged, whispered, hinted, wondered—whether that spare bed might not be large enough to hold two.

The lady, be it remembered, never said yes. On the contrary, she frowned and stared; she protested against the impropriety of the thing. She was rather ready, she declared, since he showed so much selfishness, to give up bed and chamber to him. Still she suffered him to rise when she rose, to carry her candle and show her to her room; then there was something that he had to unpin or unclasp for her. Briskly and gleefully did the comfort-loving fellow skip about as he performed all the duties of an attentive *soubrette*. In short, it seemed that he had fairly carried the point, and that the day, or rather the night, was his own, when, all at once, struck with a sudden thought, he smote his forehead,

“La! I was forgetting my nightcap!”

He hurried to the kitchen, fumbled for less than a minute in his carpet-bag, and was soon back at the door of the widow's apartment.

The door was bolted!

With dropping jaw, with cap in hand, stood the hapless wight, like Adam at the gate of Paradise. But as he well knew the humour of the person he had to deal with, he resigned himself to his fate without further entreaties and remonstrances, and repaired to his uncomfortable couch, muttering something about the folly of giving a woman even two seconds for reflection, or allowing an opportunity to escape.

Everything in this sublunary world depends on the acmé of the moment. Every oscillation of the pendulum brings with it a new combination of circumstances, and what was not only practicable, but easy at the expiration of the eleventh hour, becomes utterly impossible when the hour has struck.

There was a time, I hope I have sufficiently dwelt upon all the particulars to have satisfactorily demonstrated it, when even with the scanty means that were within our reach, it might have been in our power to secure the triumph of the national cause. A moment had been when, in the elation of their first success, our youths believed themselves equal to the most desperate undertaking, and in the strength of their faith they would have thought no more of rowing

across the Po, than Cæsar of springing across the Rubicon. But the critical moment had gone by. Afraid of that exuberant, no less perhaps than ephemeral enthusiasm, and wishing to shelter their heads under the nightcap of the Non-Intervention, the members of our provisional government had tampered with that juvenile ardour and confidence, had given it time to slacken and cool, and afforded leisure for reflection, repining, and despondency.

The arrest of the Bishop of Guastalla was the last sign of life, the last decisive act of aggression on the part of the rebels of Parma against their dethroned sovereign's abettors and favourites. Henceforth, if nothing was absolutely done to propitiate Maria Louisa's good will, nothing at least was attempted that might tend to awake her farther displeasure, or raise new obstacles against future reconciliation.

A long period of hesitancy and expectation ensued. The good people of Parma continued in the tranquil but improvident enjoyment of their cheaply-gotten liberty, endeavouring to trouble themselves as little as they could with the contingencies of the future. The military spirit of our champions had abated. They still suffered themselves to be mustered on the main square in idle parade, and even went through the routine of their manœuvres; but the orders given for green uniforms were suspended. The subscription opened for the purchase of English muskets was unproductive, and it was evident that faith had been shaken in the hearts of many, and that they would not venture any farther till they had taken a calmer view of the matter, and seen how things would ultimately turn out.

The old and wary shook their heads, and looked grave and mysterious. The selfish and cowardly contrived to get out of the scrape as expeditiously as they had got into it. A few of the young and hearty also were withdrawn from our ranks through interference of paternal authority, or weaned from the turmoil of public life through the suasive arts of maternal caresses. I remember a young comrade who had slightly hurt his foot in his hasty retreat from Fiorenzola. His mother bribed a surgeon, who, under pretence of healing, converted that trifling bruise into a painful sore, and confined the young hero to his bed till the tempest was over.

The crowded streets were gradually thinned and hushed. Order was restored without effort. The country gentlemen rode back to their homes, the tradesmen repaired to their shops.

Not that any man was more willing to part with sweet liberty, either for love or money. Every one was as happy as in the day of Tacitus, when

"Sentire quæ velis, quæ sentis dicere licet."

Pamphlets, newspapers, bills, proclamations, were issued from the press with unabating activity. Demagogues were thundering still from their rostrums; "*Virginia*," "*the Pazzi*," and "*Timoleon*" were given every night on the stage. The "*Romagnola*" and all her sister songs gladdened the air from sunset to sunrise. No one, in fact, dreamed of finding fault with that convenient order, or disorder, of things; they only felt less sanguine and cheerful about its durability.

Still there was a class of men who either would not, or thought they could not, draw back with the rest. These were especially the

students, and other youths who had shone more conspicuously, who had shouted more clamorously, during the events of the 13th of February; who had bullied Maria Louisa in the very hall of her palace. This one, it was said, had been the first to appear with a tricolored badge in his hat. The other's cockade was preposterously larger than the rest of his set. There was a young physician, who had pulled the nose of the duchess's president of the council: a young lawyer, whose green spectacles had haunted Maria Louisa's fancy ever since he appeared before her at the head of a deputation to signify to her the good pleasure of the university. These and many others were designated by public report as the most efficient instruments of the insurrection, or its staunchest supporters and partisans; for these, it was whispered, there was no chance of escape. Children of the revolution, they must triumph or perish with it. The return of their outraged mistress must bring them death or banishment. They were called "*I Compromessi*," men who had committed themselves so far that it was as dangerous for them to draw back as to rush on with the courage of despair.

Of the persons so pointed out, there were some that hoped still to shrink from a notoriety which they had once courted so eagerly, to sink into that multitude from which they had hitherto so strenuously striven to emerge, to shun that public gaze in which they were formerly so happy to bask: but there were others again who scorned all cautiousness and restraint, men who boasted to have broken with the old government beyond all chances of reconciliation, who prided themselves on their unserving consistency, who were determined to uphold the revolution at any rate, and scrupled no more to involve their town and country, than their own persons, goods and chattels, in its ruin.

In this band of forlorn hopes I was, partly from choice, partly through necessity, enlisted. Not that I would as freely have lavished other people's lives and property as I would have parted with mine,—not that I could think without a shudder of the work of devastation and plunder to which any bootless resistance might expose our helpless people—not that I was ignorant of the awful retribution with which popular insurrections had been visited by the French and Austrian soldiery during the late wars, or that I had not read Botta's descriptions of the horrors perpetrated at the sacks of Lugo, Binasco, Pavia, and Verona;—but I thought that, even if it were proved that our premature attempt could be attended with no success, even were we to confess that that revolt was all a mistake,—or, to borrow an aristocratic phrase from Prince George of Cambridge, all "*no go*," still it was our bounden duty—it was the sacred duty of all whose life was not absolutely necessary—and if we come to that, after all, whose life can be said to be indispensable in the world?—to expiate that rash deed, to atone for that error, by the sacrifice of a few hundred victims, with whose blood could be written, on the gates of our surrendering town, "*Tout est perdu fors l'honneur!*"

Of these few hundred devoted volunteers, it seemed to me that I had full right to be one. To these arguments, dictated by generous impulses, other more selfish reasons must be added, more immediately arising from the peculiarity of my situation. I was, be it remem-

bered, a runaway prisoner, and the very mildest treatment I might meet with at the hands of Maria Louisa's government, at her return, would be to be sent back to that fortress of which the rebels had so illegally broken open the gates. Moreover, my harangue from the *tribuna*, and the arrest of his eminence of Guastalla, might be construed into demagogical incendiarism and murderous aggression; and even if they had not thought me worth my rope, they might perhaps have spared me more of their hard bread and water than I cared to feast upon.

Now, whether shut up at Compiano or Spielberg, or banished to Paris, or London, Jerusalem, or Seringapatam, one thing was clear, that I had done breathing the same air with Marina, and there was no death I then thought not a thousand times preferable to the eventuality of a second parting with her.

Fixed upon so laudable a purpose, and looking upon myself as a devoted being, I began to feel more lukewarm, and to take a less active share in public transactions. I went to Pasteri's reading-rooms to hear the thousand and one absurdities of our politicians, walked to the main square at sunset to hear the "Romagnola" played by our bands, and repaired to Judge Cornaro's, into whose peaceful abode, however, the bustle of political discussion had also found its way; so that, in despair of finding even there rest and comfort, I took my leave, and, for a wonder, went home to have supper and a chat with my sister Louisa.

A short but lively sensation was produced about that time by a proclamation from Placentia, signed by our once beloved sovereign and mistress, Maria Louisa, who, for the first time after nearly three weeks, giving at last symptoms of life, offered a free and ample pardon and oblivion of the past, provided her erring subjects would voluntarily and immediately return under her maternal sway; at the same time launching forth in threats and invective against them if they showed themselves obdurate in their sin, and persevered in their insubordination and treason. This ducal mandate our provisional government thought it their duty to reprint and publish, adding, however, by way of commentary, a long apology for their own conduct; enumerating the grievances by which the old rulers had provoked popular dissatisfaction and violence; dwelling on the necessity that placed them at the helm of a state which had been left a prey to disorder and anarchy; and concluding by an appeal to the people, whom they invited to pronounce between them and their mistress.

The proclamation was read from the "ringhiera" amidst the roaring and hissing of the infuriated populace. All the terms of ignominy, with which our Parmese dialect is peculiarly rich, were freely heaped upon the person of the absent duchess; the boldest demagogues jumped upon the balcony, snatched the official paper from the hands of the terrified herald, and threw its fragments among their friends, who trampled them under their feet with an air of scorn and defiance.

And, truly, even the most sober persons could not refuse themselves to the belief, that such a powerless demonstration would not have been resorted to by the exiled duchess, had she not been utterly at a loss how to recall her people to allegiance by more efficient means. It was quite plain that Francis of Austria dared not or would not do anything for his daughter, that she was left to deal with her

subjects as she best could, and that her Germans could not extend their protection any farther than the Placentine garrison and territory.

The leniency, also, which, as if influenced by the letter of the bishop of Guastalla, the duchess showed to her prisoners, confirmed the idea that her only chance of winning back her metropolis depended on mild and conciliatory measures. For not only had the less fortunate heroes of Fiorenzola been rescued from the dungeons of the citadel, and lodged in more comfortable quarters, but, yielding to the importunity of the most conspicuous citizens of Placentia—who, by their generous and daring conduct, fully refuted the ill-grounded notions still entertained by foreigners concerning the mutual jealousies and deep-seated rancours which are still said to exist between the different Italian towns, a consequence of their ancient municipal grudges—Maria Louisa was compelled to allow them to alleviate her victims' confinement by every kindness that the most ardent sympathy could suggest, till, wearied with their daily petitions, and dreading lest their remonstrances should finally assume a bolder and more peremptory tone, she determined on the release of the prisoners, and, to our great surprise, allowed them, one after another, to re-enter our walls.

This last stroke of policy ended by completely upsetting our politicians' understanding. It was now proved beyond all doubt that no hostility was contemplated; since, had Austria ever thought of attacking us, would she have suffered those youths, who had shown themselves willing and valiant combatants, once more to join the insurrectional ranks?

Similar illusions spread an equally deplorable security and apathy among our neighbours of Modena and Romagna. Our natural allies had at first been startled by the report of the skirmish at Fiorenzola, and the bravest among them had burned with a vehement desire to march to our succour; but no sooner had the threatening storm so unaccountably vanished away, than their non-intervention hallucination regained its ascendancy, and they relapsed, as we did, into lethargy and inaction.

A general council from all the towns of Romagna was convoked at Bologna, with a view to deliberate on the *déchéance* of the Pope and his temporal government, whilst the insurrectionary bands, slowly but irresistibly carrying everything before them, marched against the metropolis of Christendom.

They had already reached Otricoli, and were encamped at the distance only of thirty miles from Rome, when a messenger of St. Aulaire, the French minister, intimated to their leader not to proceed one step further, as they cared for the protection and valued the alliance of France.

The insurgents halted!

Whilst their military operations came thus to a dead stand in the south, no provisions were made against the dangers that menaced us from the north. All efforts on the part of Modena and Parma to enter into a coalition with Romagna were unsuccessful—not, indeed, because any good patriot there longed less than any of us for Italian independence and unity, but because they feared that the imprudent manifestation of such a purpose would give unnecessary alarm to the Austrians, and afford them pretexts for interference.

Only one link of union between the three states existed, in the per-

son of their common military ruler. General Zucchi had, on the first heat of welcome, been equally saluted as generalissimo of all the forces of the insurgents; and as he, being a stranger to the secret proceeding which had brought about our revolutionary movement, knew nothing of the timid and evasive policy that presided over our councils, he issued immediate orders for an *Italian national army*, of which Parma was to furnish the first legion.

His plan of defence—for attack was, for the moment, out of the question—was notified to our provisional government. Parma and Modena were considered as too helplessly exposed to sudden inroads to offer any chance of efficacious resistance. Consequently, our national guard and regular forces, at the first attack, were to evacuate the town, and fall back upon Modena; and hence, again, they were to repair to Bologna, which was intended as our military centre, and which, by its position and population, had more than once kept at a distance even larger armies than the Austrians at present could muster.

This system was perhaps rational and plausible; but our old general took it for granted—what seemed natural enough—that the Austrians would begin their operations with the Parmese, and that nothing would be easier for them than to retreat to the eastward, in proportion as we were pressed from the west. There was the blunder.

One evening—it was on the sixth or seventh of March, 1831—a vague rumour was spread at Parma, that the Duke of Modena had effected the occupation of his capital; a few hours later the tidings were, that his highness and his troops had been routed by the patriots, and the tricolor standard again waved from the top of the Ghirlardina;* next it was bruited that Austrians were seen on duty at the gates of Reggio, and that that town, as well as every other in the duchy, was declared in a state of siege.

In the morning it was reported that the black and yellow standard floated on the bridge of the Enza.

I walked to the Palazzo del Governo, and sued for an audience.

“Strange rumours are afloat, my lords; every minute we hear most contradictory news. Our people are mad with anxiety and alarm, and, what is more provoking, the authors of these reports are nowhere to be found. Trust me for once. Suffer me to ride out on an exploring excursion. I promise you never to come back without satisfactory information.”

“Well, go, and God be with thee,” said my friend Da Costa.

I hastened home and saddled my Hungarian.

I hid my pistols under my riding cloak, and rode up to the Porta San Michele.

“There goes De Negri,” cried one of the people. “The storm thickens, and he takes to his heels.”

“Hush, for shame!” said another. “He is a *Compromesso*, and who could blame him if he seek to provide for his safety?”

“Nay, nay, my good friends,” I replied bitterly, “know you not whither this road leads? I am going to call on the Austrians, and to throw them this gauntlet on your part.”

So saying, I gave my charger the spur, and galloped away.

* A steeple at Modena—one of the highest in Italy.

HOW TO MAKE GOLD.

BY EDEN LOWTHER.

OUR London was *then* some few hundred years younger than it is now. When was *then*? Why, on a certain dull dusky evening, when a young stripling in a velvet suit, and a diamond buckle in his cap, and shoes turned up at the toes, and with all the rest of the appendages of an exquisite of that century, turned into a certain antiquated, grotesquely-carved, low-fronted shop, and bade them bring him a jewelled chain, much as if he had thought gems of no better worth than pebbles.

Now it is very certain that those who think much of themselves are sure to make others take them at their own valuation; and thus it was, that whilst our gallant was most obsequiously being shown rubies, and pearls, and emeralds, in their finest and fairest settings, and as humbly as though they were altogether unworthy of his worthiness, a certain humble individual, albeit a woman, who was standing in one corner of the shop, evidently valuing herself at the smallest amount possible, in a very shabby brokerly sort of estimation, was on the same rule hurried and flurried, and shuffled from one side to the other, proving beyond a doubt that the master jeweller and his apprentices thought as little of her as she did of herself.

Dear reader, take a hint. Value yourself up to your highest amount, and others will do so too. Mind, I did not tell you to value yourself beyond it.

The eye of his worship, our gallant, being perhaps somewhat dazzled by the sight of the jewels, had not rested upon the dim figure in the corner until, by an accidental movement, he suddenly discovered that this statue-like automaton piece of womankind had a pair of eyes set in her head brighter, more radiant, more glorious, richer and rarer, than all the jewels in Master Jeweller's shop.

Of course those who are wishing to possess the best of every thing immediately disregard all inferior things. The diamonds were now no better than bits of glass, the emeralds dull stones, and the pearls nothing but the signs of disease in vulgar, low-bred, eatable fish. The gallant had eyes for nothing but the possessor of those brilliant gems, and he began to survey her with all his own. Howbeit those orbs flashed no more upon him, the head was bent, and the whole attitude was impressed with the speaking expression of a *felt* degradation. Nothing could be more injurious to grace than this, for ease must ever be a part of grace. And then for dress! what daughter of Eve ever wore a shabbier black gown or a more threadbare cloak? and perhaps it was the shame of this shabbiness that made the owner of those eyes hang down her head, and draw the folds of her old veil more thickly down, and cower away from the sight, not only of our gay youth, but of Master Jeweller and his apprentices.

"Here be diamonds from Golconda, fit for the crown of the king's majesty, set in the newest and the rarest fashion," said Master Jeweller; "what says your worship to this new taste?"

"Thou and I, Master Jeweller, ought to take shame and blame to ourselves, inasmuch as a lady stands by, who is fairer than all the jewels in the world, disregarded, whilst thou and I art chaffering for baubles. I pray thee, take the lady's pleasure."

"Not so," said the maiden, shrinking more into the corner and herself. "I will abide your leisure, Master Jeweller."

"Then art thou at leisure now, Master Jeweller. 'Thou doest nothing more for me till thou hast obeyed this lady's will;' and so saying the gallant affected to retire to the other extremity of the shop, and pretended neither to see nor to hear, whilst all the while he was looking with all his eyes, and listening with all his ears."

The maiden trembled from head to foot. She internally wished herself in any out-of-way place of the earth, in any nook or corner, almost at the bottom of the sea, (people sometimes wish *rather* injudiciously,) in fact, anywhere, without being at all particular, so that she were out of her present corner in that jeweller's shop. Feeling, however, that escape was impossible, she began to consider what was the next best thing; and not being at all handy at subterfuge, or ready witted at evasion, she made up her mind at once that the best thing, because it was the only one, was to transact her business as expeditiously as might be, and then abscond out of that disagreeable corner as quickly as possible. On which most wise and magnanimous consideration and resolution, she forthwith proceeded to draw from her bosom a very antiquated, cumbrously-fashioned ring, and though the hand that held it out blushed rosy red to the very tips of its fingers, to present it to the jeweller, and in a low, hesitating husky voice to stutter out, "What might you be willing to—to—afford for that, Master Jeweller?"

Master Jeweller took the ring, and of course looked at it as though it were very trashy indeed, mere trumpery, much as Rundell and Brydge might look on mosaic gold, and exactly as all people look on the things which they are asked to buy, which is of course just in the very contrary way to that they put on when they mean to sell.

"Good soothe, I believe me this ruby is flawed," said the jeweller; "and as for the setting, it is altogether so marvellously bad that it must be melted down. The fashion is execrable—antediluvian—as old as Adam." (Adam was thought quite as old-fashioned in those days as in ours.) "How much want you for this crazy ring?"

"It is antique," said the maiden, with a sigh; "my father therefore said that the worth was the higher. It hath been long in our family, and they say that the gem is a rare one."

"Ay, people, when they carry their goods to market, always cry a great bush. But, at a word, for his lordship waits, five marks is the highest I will give you, mistress."

"Hath it no higher worth?" exclaimed the maiden, in very sorrowful tones.

"I will adjudge this matter, Master Jeweller," said the youth, advancing. "I have an admirable skill in jewels. I could estimate to

a penny the crown of our liege lord the king. I know at a glance the water and the worth of a diamond. I know the weight of a stone without thy scales and balances—thy rubies, and thy emeralds, and thy topazes, thy onyx, and sardonyx, and sapphires, there is no deceiving me in any of these things. Hand over to me the ring, and I will tell thee the real valuation which thou shalt render to this lady; and let me tell thee, Master Jeweller, she does thee no small grace in coming hither to traffic with thee her own fair self."

The maiden drew her veil more closely round her, and averted her face more determinately as the young gallant stood stooping by her side, hoping to catch a second edition of her voluminous look.

"Five marks!" exclaimed the gentleman. "Good sooth! thou art either a blind man, or a knave, Master Jeweller. Say rather, twenty!"

The jeweller lifted up his eyes, and the maiden lifted up hers. The youth went on eulogizing either her jewels of eyes, or her jewel of a ring—he knew best himself.

"A flaw, saidst thou? why, man, thy eyesight is flawed! Such jewels as these never was it my lot to meet with before. Five marks, saidst thou?—thou shouldst have offered thirty!"

Again the maiden's eyes flashed upwards.

"Why, in good truth, I am almost as blind as thou. What beauty! what water! what lustre! what form! what splendour! Would I not give a throne for such gems as thine! Come, we will say five-and-thirty-marks."

"Your worship is demented," said the jeweller.

The maiden had by this time almost forgotten her own desire of remaining under her obscurity and personally unknown, and looked up in the young courtier's face, utterly forgetful that he was gazing in her own.

"Beautiful! spotless! fair!—the workmanship of a most divine hand. I would it were mine own! Master Jeweller, thou shalt count out to this lady forty marks of gold;—nay, never wince, man, I will guarantee thy gain upon it. Fair madam, will this content you?"

"I am much beholden to your worship," said the maiden, curtsying low, while a fresh flush of the bright red current of life dyed her brow again bright ruby red.

At a sign from the young cavalier, the jeweller paid down the forty golden marks, which the maiden hastily gathered up, with a degree of avidity rather strongly developed, and, drawing her veil more closely round her, with a low reverence to Master Jeweller, and a lower to the young gallant, she glided out of the shop.

"I will see thee again, Master Jeweller," said his young worship. "Take care of my newly-purchased ring, and to-morrow I will give thee thy guerdon;" and so saying, the youth departed as though he was in haste, and—of course quite by accident—happened to take the same course as the damsel.

Some where about a stone's throw from the venerable palace of his grace of Canterbury, within sight of the weathercock, and almost

within sound of the ticking of the old church clock of St. Mary's, stands a row of old-fashioned, crumbling-away houses, with very low doors, and deeply-sunken windows, and high-pointed roofs, the faces of which look into a particularly narrow street, as yet unmodernized in its pavement, being neither macadamized nor asphaltumized, and having nothing but cobbles the wrong side upwards for both man and beast to walk upon, and being faced by a row, on the opposite side, as like unto themselves as though they had been cast in the same mould, and were brethren of the same family, or like peas taken out of the same shells, or like their own reflection in a looking-glass. However, we have no intention of carrying our readers into the mansions of that side of the way. *Our* side had a profile that looked out upon the windings and the wanderings, and the washings and the splashings, and the fumings and the frettings, and the passions and the pettings, and the comings and the goings, of our great-grandfather Thames, who went hurrying and fussing backwards and forwards, going his errands from one end of the town to the other, and, furthermore, into the country, day after day, seeming as if he would never get tired, and, at the time of which we are speaking, just bringing up a little wherry, rowed by a couple of sturdy retainers, with certain glittering badges on their arms, who, having brought up their bark to some certain ill-fashioned, ungainly steps, covered with mud, which led, by a particularly crooked, lame-making road, to the afore-mentioned street, paused to allow a certain silent, sentimental, or sulky youth to disembark, and kick his way with the points of his toes on the points of the cobbly-stoned pathway.

"Wait my return," said the youth, very much in the tone of a master—and masters have rather a particular tone sometimes—"wait here till I return."

"And a pretty wait we are likely to have of it!" muttered the two men to each other, taking, however, most particular care that the gentleman as above should not hear them. "Master Spencer has gone fishing for stars with his hook and line, and we shall have plenty of time to catch plenty of colds before he comes back."

"Yes; and without any hook or line, by which I suppose you mean fine speechifying, and looks like sugar-candy, we shall just catch as many stars here, swimming in the old river, as he will with the help of his clerkship and books:" and as he spoke, the elder servitor pointed to the bright reflections of the stars, mirrored in their silent beauty on the face of the calm river.

"And why?" said the younger oar. "He is a gainly youth, likely enough to make women look after him—ay, marry, and even run after him, for the matter of that."

"True enough," replied his comrade, "with the feather in his cap, and his embroidered cloak—women have a mighty good taste in men when they wear jewels—but Master Spencer will find himself marvellously passed over in a gray suit and a student's cap. See you not that he has laid aside his bravery, and has made himself as mean in his outward man as some thrifty housewife's seventh son. Pah! that's never the way to make women look after him! If he had asked *me*, I could have told him a better tale than that."

"And much chance is there of his asking either thee or me!" said the other ironically.

"He has a sufficiently pretty knack of getting his own way, without asking other people at all about it," responded the other; "but mother wit told me to coax a flask of wine out of the cellar, to amuse ourselves withal—so here's to thee, to begin with."

Meanwhile Master Spencer picked his way over the wrong-ended cobbles up the old-fashioned street, and passing house after house of their wrinkled and antiquated physiognomies, paused at last, with an air of most accurate precision, before a particular and identical one, which he seemed to be able to discern from the others remarkably well, and in another minute or so he had managed to penetrate into a dark, dim-lit chamber, which we may suppose he had often been in before, as nothing about it seemed to strike him with any newness or surprise. An old gray-haired man was sitting at a small table, the wrinkles of time being underlined with the wrinkles of thought. He was thin and cadaverous, and his worn-out garments were hanging loosely on his emaciated limbs, while an air of intense anxiety pervaded his countenance, and an unceasing restlessness his person. On the opposite side of that narrow table sat a bluff man, whose comely face had been sunned by some thirty summers, and who seemed to have found this world of ours a remarkably easy one to travel through, judging from the excellent stock of self-complaisance which he had accumulated on his journey. Nine-tenths of the women of England, and we are bound to allow them to be the best judges in the world, would have pronounced him handsome—a judgment which he would have considered strictly correct—but the one-tenth would have paused and considered, and turned away with a curled lip, and said that they would leave the man to his own good opinion—he possibly ate too much, or he drank too much—he was too round and too short; and he did not *think* enough, nor *feel* enough; and he might do well enough for others, but not for them;—and this opinion was evidently that of a maiden who was sitting in the corner of the room, as far away from the gentleman in question as the limit of their domicile allowed, pretending neither to see him when he looked, nor hear him when he spoke.

The entrance of Master Spencer produced various effects on the different personages in that dull, dusky, ill-furnished room. The countenance of the old man brightened upon the youth, that of his comely visitor darkened, whilst the face of the young girl, after its flashing joyousness, changed alternately from the semblance of red light to that of white writing-paper.

Master Spencer doffed his student's cap, and saluted the old man courteously.

"How fares it with you, Master Aylmer? and you, my bright-eyed Margaret?"

"Call nothing yours till you have got it," said the bluff gentleman.

"Ah, Master Smeaton, so art thou there again! Wouldst teach me a croaking raven's note? Call nothing mine till I have got it,

saidst thou? In good sooth I will; and as many things as I desire, I will not only *call* mine, but *make* mine. They shall be mine by anticipation till they are mine by possession.

"Speak thus of the things that thou canst buy!" said Master Smeaton, angrily.

"And what can I not buy?" replied the young student.

"Canst thou buy woman's love?" said Smeaton, glancing at Margaret—"and will she not feel the injury of so mean a thought?"

"It is thine own thought that is the injury, putting so mean a value on the price which thou couldst offer. Yes, I would even buy woman's love. But how? You, fair Margaret, shall be judge between us;" and Master Spencer approached the maiden, and assailing her with eyes that needed no dictionary to explain their meaning, spoke in a honeyed tone—"Maiden, may not love be bought? and would not your sex be satisfied with the price of every thought, of every hope, of every feeling; of days spent in treasuring up every word that you might utter, every glance that you might speed; and of nights devoted, not to dull sleep, but to counting over the jewels of memory thus garnered up? And then for actions, as a part of the purchase-money;—actions that should shield you from every grief; interpose between you and every cloud, every trouble, every shade; actions which should know nothing of self but to fence you round with an embrasure of love on every side! What say you, Mistress Margaret—might not love be even bought with such a price as this?"

"The love of a queen!" murmured Margaret.

"Good sooth!" exclaimed Smeaton, "is it the fashion in these days for the young gallants to make open court to the maidens in the very eyes of their kindred and acquaintance? In my time, and that is not far gone by, such things were whispered in secret, and not brazened and blazoned abroad like the singing of some flaunting ditty; if they had been so, maidens would have flouted, and fathers would have frowned."

"Maidens can frown in these days, Master Smeaton," said Margaret; and to prove which, for his particular benefit, she suited the action to the word in right good earnest.

"Girls are ever fond of gewgaws," muttered Smeaton; "but for grave, wise-going men—why, Master Spencer, are you for saying that sage, pains-taking men are to be bought?"

"Ay, bought," replied Spencer to him; and then turning respectfully to the old man—"their good opinion is to be bought by reverence, by submission, by the affection and the duty of a son."

The old man's face became more composed, more tearful as his eye melted into kindness in looking upon Spencer, and he answered Smeaton—"The youth is a good youth, Master Smeaton, an you knew him better."

"And how long may you have known him to find it out?" asked Smeaton, scornfully. "A few summer days hath he fluttered his butterfly wings around you, and now you count more of him than the well-worn friendship of years."

"Nay, Master Smeaton," said the old man, "the youth hath delved deep into the occult sciences, and thou knowest that I have dabbled

therein mine own self; it is therefore that I count much of Master Spencer; and Margaret, good child, thinks gently of him for my sake."

"For his own, thou shouldst rather say," said Smeaton, with a great spice of spleen; "and for thy sciences, why, Master Aylmer, is he such a knave as to lead thee blindfold into that bog—that quagmire?"

"Master Smeaton, thy wayfaring life hath led thee altogether apart and away, so that thou canst not even see the great object which the greatest and the wisest men of the world have been so long striving after; but Master Spencer has been spending his youth in the grave study of the adept."

"Good faith!" exclaimed Smeaton—"as if there were any other way of making gold than by working for it, or fighting for it, or in the way of the merchant, or the seafaring man!"

"Ay, these are the ways, the every-day, well-trodden ways of men of homely wits; but then there are men whose minds, exploring the angelical roads of science, find among the higher mysteries that the baser metals may be transmuted into gold."

"And Master Spencer edges you on into these fooleries, doubtless for his own craftiness?"

"Thou callest these sublimities by such irreverent names, because thou art altogether in the dark both of their spirit and essence. Master Spencer, good youth, hath none of the craftiness of the invention, though he hath a rare knowledge of the influences of certain herbs and minerals, and the aspects of the heavenly bodies; but the sublime science of alchemy was, as far as my poor knowledge goes, cultivated by the wise men of Arabia, the Greeks also, and even the Chinese."

"Give me patience, Master Aylmer! What crotchets are these that are sticking in your brain? What need have you to look after a lot of antediluvian fools, and walk in their footsteps?"

"It becomes not us to speak thus disparagingly of our forefathers; they were wise men, and they knew that under certain of the heavenly influences of the planets—"

"Fooleries of the planets—for you seem to me moon-struck!—or, rather, fooleries of Master Spencer here, for he seems to be leading you, for purposes of his own, like a very will-o'-the-wisp!"

"Master Smeaton," said Spencer, "it seems to me that you are making more free than welcome with a name which my father left in my keeping; and my senses, which, such as they are, are mine to make the best of; I beg of thee, therefore, to find some fairer subject that we may joust upon, for I protest to thee, that, notwithstanding my various professions of gold-making and love-making, I am at perfect leisure to quarrel with thee, and am now at thy entire service."

"Thou art but a pert stripling," exclaimed Smeaton, "and I confess that it angers me, and makes my blood hot, to see thee thus deluding a weak maiden, and misleading a blind man."

"Dost thou dare to call my Margaret weak, and her father blind?" said Spencer. "Thou art altogether unworthy of grace from either!"

Margaret pouted her pretty lip, and the old man knitted his brows. Young girls never yet took it as any compliment to be called "weak," any more than old men like to be deemed "blind."

"Thou knave! thou cheat! thou deluder!" exclaimed Smeaton. "Thou knowest full well that thou art only aiding and abetting the phantasies of my old friend, Master Aylmer, on purpose that thou mayest delude him of his girl!"

"Thou hast hit upon a sensible meaning," replied Spencer, "but hast managed altogether to deface it with thy vilifying words. I disclaim not thy interpretation, nevertheless, in a fairer aspect. And where is the shame of recommending myself to a duteous daughter by means of respectful and honourable service to the father whom she loves?—and Master Aylmer himself will bear me witness that I do no more."

"The youth is a good youth," murmured the old man.

"He is blinding their eyes with the dust of vanity!" exclaimed Smeaton. "Me he cannot blind, and he is therefore cheating me with mine eyes open. Master Aylmer, thou wert wont to be an honest man, and wilt thou now gainsay thine own plighted word? Thou didst promise me that, when I came back from this venture, thou wouldst teach that girl a reason why she should not thus frown and coil herself away from me. Art thou willing to keep thy word, I ask of thee?"

The old man looked in an agony; the twitchings of his face, and the nervousness of his whole body, increased almost to an agony.

"I promised thee that if my labour in the angelical science had succeeded—and I was even then on the brink of success—that I would pay thee that which I owed thee;—but alas! an unlucky accident"—the old man's voice trembled, and he broke off.

Smeaton smiled maliciously. "Well, and otherwise?"

"Otherwise, I said that I would beg of my Margaret to receive thee more graciously. But I knew that I could not be called upon to do so, inasmuch as I felt for a verity that, under the heavenly influences, the transmutation was on the brink of verification, and then I should have repaid thee those monies which thou hadst lent for the prosecution of my studies and experiments, with large usury and honourable thanks."

"Was it for the forwarding of your experiments, Master Aylmer, that this money was lent?" asked Spencer.

"To a certainty," replied Aylmer.

"And thou to gibe and flaunt *me* with an endeavour to palm upon Master Aylmer's sense for the purpose of deluding him of his Margaret!—thou who hadst thus been beforehand practising thine own vile accusations!"

"Thou hadst better pay me that thou owest, Master Aylmer—I love not to be bullied—or else teach this girl to turn these scornful airs into pleasant looks. As for this fellow, bid him begone! What has he to do with our counsels?"

"Would I could pay thee!" ejaculated the old man piteously.

"Good Master Ledger, how stands your account? Let us hear at what price in beggarly lucre you thought to buy the heaven of my Margaret's smiles and favour."

"What is that to thee, prate-apace?"

"Master Smeaton seems to forget," interposed Margaret, "that, though but a simple maiden, I am not to be chaffered for like one of his bales of goods."

"Tush! never fear but I will be kind to thee, and please thy little heart to the full. I will buy thee feathers and a farthingale, and strings of pearls and chains of gold. Thou shalt have a little page to wait on thee, and when we walk abroad the women shall all envy thee. Thou shalt rustle in thy silks, and brave it with the best of them. I will deny thee nothing, and thou dost not know how rich I am."

"And thou thinkest thus with toys and gewgaws to buy woman's love!" exclaimed Spencer indignantly.

"I will not be thus fooled a minute longer. Make up your mind, Master Aylmer. Your money or your promise! your money or your promise!"—demanded Smeaton.

"Alack! what an evil day!" exclaimed the old man.

"Count up thy debt, Master Smeaton," said Spencer; "and if needs must, it may be that Master Aylmer may repay thee—with the little of a poor student's aid."

"Alas, no, my good youth, it is beyond our means, both thine and mine!"

"Ha! ha! ha! Don't think to tell gold as well as words with me. Ha! ha! ha! Besides, I tell thee, that I am to be paid out of the crucible! out of the crucible!—either that or the girl! I want none other every-day vulgar gold, such as men dig for and delve for!—I have enough of that! Master Aylmer promised on the faith of the philosopher's stone, and I hold him to his plighted word. The girl or the gold! the girl or the gold! I dare you to deny me, Master Aylmer."

"Alas, it is even so!" lamented the alchemist.

"Even so be it then," said Spencer, after a moment's deliberation. "Master Smeaton, we will renew the bargain. Sensible men waste not their time in bandying angry words. What need for railing? Master Aylmer shall repay thee out of his crucible the first gold that he finds in it."

"Ha! ha! ha!" scornfully laughed Smeaton. "But when? when?—a hundred years hence?"

"Nay, but before thou shalt have slept and eaten some half-a-dozen times more."

"In three days hence?"

"Master Aylmer," said Spencer to the old man, "thou knowest that the heavenly bodies give out their most benign influence on the second night after this. Thou knowest that the wise men of old would have given the half of their own lives to have been in existence when that glorious aspect shall be taking place, and thou and I should think ourselves happy that the scales have fallen from our eyes, and enabled us to see what glorious things may be achieved at that propitious moment."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Smeaton; "is it thus he cajoles him?"

"We must needs pity him," continued Spencer. "Thus it ever is

with the besotted and the sensual; they cannot see the pure and holy expanses which study and devotion open out to the adept. They are blind—blind—and we must needs pity them. But, as we were saying, all things concur to render our faith strong in this our coming hour. So firm is my conviction of success, that I am content to hazard the happiness of my whole life upon it."

"Good youth, where hast thou got thy wisdom? I will adventure all with thee, though I have spent my life in this pursuit, and it would well-nigh break my heart to find it but a dream, as the ignorant say; but their grosser natures cannot see the higher subtleties of the ethereal essences; but, as thou sayest, the heavenly natures, as it may be said, have been gathering themselves together in their strength to make the oncoming hour propitious, and thou and I have laboured to gather together those pure influences which shall come in such a glorious fruition. Ah! good youth, he speaks lightly of thy wit and youth, but lament not over thy young days, for thy name shall be handed down to posterity, coupled with mine own, and men shall say—"

"Ha! ha! ha!" chimed in Smeaton discordantly.

"—that together we have consummated the most glorious of discoveries, which but to imagine possible gave fame in bygone days to the few great men who dared to believe in its bare credibility."

"I desire only to render you such fair service as beseems me, and care for nothing that oncoming ages may say of my small capacity. In fact, I desire not that my present doings should take any place in the page of history—though albeit in some humble page—some love tale, 'and he glanced at Margaret,'—I desire to be known no further."

"I will just so far be surety for thee!" exclaimed Smeaton. "Thou art, then, as I suspected, more knave than fool. However, I think thou art in a fair way of being caught in thine own trap. If I understand our bargain, I am either to be paid in pure gold out of your crucible, or—" and he glanced at Margaret.

"I subscribe to it," said the old man, "if so be that Master Spencer sees it good."

"I subscribe to it also, but on conditions," said Spencer. "Is it fair that I should put the losing of my all upon one cast, without a hope of gaining by success?"

"Thou wilt gain gold," said Smeaton, scornfully.

"But what is gold to me?" said Spencer; and then turning to the old man, "If thou art putting my Margaret in the hazard, and I am to submit to the dread of losing her, ought I not to have some hope of winning also? Thou knowest that I have toiled and delved with thee, and am placing my all in this adventure with thee, and that I am seeking to be as a son to thee, and wilt thou not on thy part be as a father to me?"

"Even as thou and my Margaret will, for ye are both my dear ones."

"A bargain is it, then?" said Smeaton.

"A bargain," said the alchemist.

"And think ye all," exclaimed Margaret, rising indignantly, and coming forward amongst them, the hot tears rolling over her crimson

cheeks, and her eyes on fire with anger, "think ye all that I am to be bought and sold, and chaffered for and cheapened, as though I were some handful of makeweight to a pedlar's bargain? As for you, Master Spencer, when you send out a venture to sea, let it be something to which you can make out some title of pretension. If it be your household goods and chattels, no one will gainsay your right; but if you choose to hazard your dog upon some idle venture, some trifling wager, see that he be first well beaten into submission; or your horse, that it be well bridled! For myself, I am not yours! I am not yours to throw into the scale of any idle bargain! Good sooth! we've come to a pretty pass when young cavaliers can say, 'This is my property! it is of little value! I will cast it here, or I will throw it there!'"

Smeaton shrugged up his shoulders. "A pretty rating!"

"For thee!" said Margaret, her attention caught by his voice, and turning round upon him sharply. "I think the less of what thou canst do in thy mean nature, but from him I expected better things. Bargain as ye will, I am for none of you!"

"Is this our gentle Margaret?" exclaimed Smeaton. "Why, I have known her from her cradle, and never thought that she could speak louder than her singing-bird. Good lack, is she such a shrew? I would rather face the buffets of six men-at-arms!"

"My pretty Margaret," said Spencer, "if I ever dared to think thee less than perfect, it was in the faint fear that thy milkiness of nature required flavour. Now the light that is in thine eye, and the fire that burns in thy cheek, and the spirit that breathes out of thy brave heart, prove that thou wert made for communion with higher souls, not alone for the silken companion of a summer day, but to stem the storm of bitter and biting adversity. The moon is beautiful in all her changes, and so art thou!"

"Every man to his taste!" muttered Smeaton. "A gentle voice is an excellent thing in woman. I did not think she could have spoken so loud. She hath well-nigh scared me!"

What had been the future was now the present.

The second night had come, and in that lowly habitation where Margaret and her father dwelt, was gathered a little group for whom the events of the next hour were to decide the filling up of the large empty cup of hope, or the breaking it all to pieces, and casting the broken fragments on the ground.

It was midnight: the clock of St. Mary counted out the hours with most exact arithmetic, and the sound echoed through a dreary dark-walled chamber where Margaret and her two suitors and the alchemist were assembled. The place was all imbued with the mysterious tracings of those strange studies by which the adepts hoped to make a world of gold. The roof, crossed by the unsightly beams, was blackened by the smoke of many a midnight fire, rising from the furnace in the centre, which was now burning with its deep red light glowing out of the charcoal, and throwing fitful gleamings over the place, quite sufficient to show the murky walls and the strange apparatus scattered all around; on that intense blood-red fire was a large

crucible, over which the alchemist was leaning, his eyes burning and devouring like the fire which threw its fitful gleams upon his anxious, time-worm countenance. It was easy to see, that however he might be buoyed up by artificial stimulants, his fears were largely preponderating over his hopes. He kept continually glancing his anxious eyes on Spencer, who was standing near him, every now and then whispering words of confidence, and joyfully anticipating the event. No shade of doubt appeared to shadow the brow of the young adept. His confidence seemed unshaken, for his courage was of the heart as well as of the mind; a feeling as much as a principle. Nay, there was even a superadded air of saucy exultation breathing over him as he glanced his quick-travelling eye over his companions, first upon Smeaton, who stood like a man in a dream wondering at everything, but most of all when he should awake, and then upon Margaret, who was leaning against the dusky wall a little apart, with her eyes resting on the crucible, in the depths of which lay her destiny, her long hair hanging in rich tresses, her lustrous black eyes straining themselves to search out coming wonders, her lips slightly apart, her colour crimson, her garments wrapped around her, her foot on tiptoe. Altogether the scene looked like a strange piece of fortune-telling, in which the furnace was burning and the caldron bubbling, and they whose destiny was brewing were standing round.

"What thinkest thou?" said the alchemist to Spencer, in the low hushed voice in which men speak in churches which they reverence. "What thinkest thou? Doth thy spirit droop? Doth thy heart smile? are thy hopes sick?"

Spencer smiled joyously and encouragingly upon the old man, and as they thus stood together with the red light flashing over them, no finer contrast both in person and character could be imagined than they thus furnished. The manly, the intrepid, the open, the exhilarating expression of his countenance, looked like sunshine by the side of the trembling, fearful, irresolute, quailing aspect of the alchemist. The smile with which he answered the doubting queries of his fellow-adept might have been sufficient; but in addition to its reply, he took the thin, bony, wrinkled hand of his companion within his own, and with a kindly pressure laid the long finger upon the pulse of his own wrist. The alchemist looked up into his face with a look of reassured hope.

"Thou art full of hope: thy pulse beats as calmly as an infant's—mine bounds and throbs,—ah! dost thou not feel it? I am in the fire!"

"Be at peace—be assured. Trust me, we cannot fail: all things go well."

"But thou art young and sanguine,—I was once so; and often when I seemed to stand on the summit of success, at the very moment when I looked for the fruition, I was dashed down in despair! But I hoped on—over and over again—and now my head is gray, and my child is in jeopardy, for she loveth not that man! Seest thou not her disquietude? And may we not have been heedless of some of those benign influences which must all concur for our success? Ah! I tell thee that often when my hopes have been as high as thine, they have been dashed down to the earth!"

"Fear it not! I am as certain of success as my own existence."

"Thou carriest it bravely to the last," said Smeaton, "but I would I were out of this! It savoureth of witchcraft, and I love not to touch my fingers with the pitch."

"Thy worldly nature is altogether too gross for the divine sciences," said the alchemist.

"Thou art something less than courteous," said Smeaton, "and I tell ye plainly, that were it not for the maiden's sake I would note these dark doings. But though I know it is no better than foolery and jugglery, I stand by to see fair play, for either I have my gold out of that crucible, or Margaret is mine by right of compact."

"Thy gold thou shalt have," responded Spencer, "but not even in a thought shalt thou dare to consider my Margaret thine."

"Is she," said Margaret sadly and reproachfully, "to be the toy of an idle lottery—won or lost by chance!"

"Dost thou call our labours in that holy science, in which thy father has passed his life, but a lottery and a chance," exclaimed the alchemist. "Alas! alas! and this from mine own child! what then may I expect from the world! A prophet hath indeed but little honour in his own country! Good youth, were it not for thee, my soul would well-nigh lose its courage!"

"But Margaret meant it not as a reproach either to thee or to our noble science. It was rather to me." And as he spoke, Spencer approached her, and dropping his voice into those silver sweet tones which are only meant for loving listenings,—“Words of reproach, my Margaret, and the first utterance of your heart to mine since we were three days younger. How many hours of happiness have we thus lost!”

"Am I to beg favour of thee? am I to humble myself before thee, and ask the alms even of a word? Hast thou spoken, and have I not answered! Thinkest thou, because I am poor and lowly, and thou hast chosen to doff thy finery to make thyself mine equal, that I were to sue for thy favour? I tell thee nay! and were it not that thou hast so woven thyself around my poor father's heart, that to tear thee away would rend him, I would even now proclaim to him that thou art not what thou seemest!"

"What then am I?" asked Spencer calmly.

"I know not! I remember thee well in thy bravery, when thou wentest ruffling in the shop of Master Jeweller; I remember thee as thou wert then—now thou art content to come among us as a humble student."

"My simple Margaret," replied Spencer, "and dost thou not yet know that all is not gold that glitters? Many a homely youth, who can but scantily supply his daily need, will yet rustle it gaily in his holiday garb. Shall I come to thee in this saint-day fashion, and show thee that I have no double dealing?"

"Thou talkest of double dealing, and yet canst thou honestly say that thou believest there will prove gold among the rubbish of yonder crucible? Thy brain must needs be wandering, or thy senses small, or else thou canst prize me indeed but little, to dare to put me on so wild a hazard!"

"My Margaret, thou art as great a little unbeliever as yonder loon."

"Tell me not of him."

"I will not, Margaret. I will rather tell thee that, notwithstanding all thy churlishness of words, even within these three days of thy displeasure I have been happy,—ah! how happy—in being near thee. Is not the mere presence of those we love, happiness? There is a very atmosphere of happiness around them, and but to be within it, satisfies the soul. Prizing thee thus, canst thou think that I would hazard thy dear heart upon any reckless venture? Rest happy, for whatever thou mayest believe or disbelieve, gold shall come from that crucible as surely as the sun gives us light. And will not thy father be happy, dearest, in the accomplishment of all his long-cherished wishes, and shall we not both be happy, at least if thou art not determined upon preferring thy elder suitor," said Spencer smilingly.

"Thou shalt choose between us, and I will give him all fair play."

"Name him not!" exclaimed Margaret.

"The time approaches," said the alchemist, "the eventful moment. Keep ye silence all, and let no unhallowed thought find entrance into your soul, lest you mar the sacred influence. Master Spencer, lose not thy time with my unbelieving child, but come thou hither and keep watch with me, that we lose not the precious moment of transmutation."

"A few moments more or less," said Spencer, "need not be too deeply thought for."

"There for the first time I differ with thee—for Trismegistus sayeth—but let there be silence on our lips, and let our souls ponder. I would that I could still the beating of my heart."

There was silence among them. The smoke from the furnace and the deep red glow of its light came over the face of the alchemist, as with intense emotion he hung over the burning fusion. Scarcely less intense seemed the anxiety of his daughter, whose large lustrous eyes rested first upon the crucible, then on her father, then upon Spencer. Smeaton looked on half stupified, yet tenaciously holding fast his obstinacy and dogged determination. The young student alone possessed his buoyant equanimity.

"And now," said Spencer, "the time of expectancy is gone. All is either as we hoped or as we feared. The moment of precious influence is over. Now, my best friend, let thine own anxious eyes be first gladdened with the sight of the fruit of all thy labours. Look thou first upon the issue of thy toils, and bethink thee of that great renown which shall belong to the first successful alchemist."

"Mine eyes are dim, my limbs totter, my senses fail me! Look thou!"

The student took the iron forceps in his hand, and, after removing piece by piece of the glowing charcoal, lifted out the crucible, and emptied it of the embers, when, lo! from its very depths there fell a real, a true, a solid, pure, heavy, substantial mass of that glittering gold which our world is running so madly after.

The old man clasped his hands, and fell sobbing upon Spencer's shoulder. Margaret half shrieked in joyful astonishment. Smeaton looked confusion worse confounded. Spencer's face wore only his sly smile.

"My blessed youth!" exclaimed the alchemist, "I should never have succeeded but for thee."

"*I don't think you would,*" thought Master Spencer.

Master Smeaton was of course paid out of the crucible, and in a very little time after, the alchemist, and his daughter, and his son-in-law, for such Spencer soon became, removed to a noble mansion which overhung the Thames. Wonderful were the results of alchemy, for, lo! the dwelling of the gold-maker might well have sufficed for the habitation of a prince. Margaret rustled in silks and jewels like a little queen. Spencer lavished gold around him, and was surrounded by retainers, whilst the alchemist looked fondly on them both, and proudly on the rich orderings around him, and every now and then ejaculated, "It was a blessed day when I betook me to the study of the angelical science, and it was a blessed day when I met with Master Spencer. He was ever a good youth to me, and aided me in my studies when other men only stared and smiled upon them, and I have been able to reward him as it behoved me. Let me see—I have given him two goodly estates, and mansions altogether fair to look upon, and men-servants and maid-servants, and jewels, and precious stones, to say nothing of Margaret's somewhat vain attire; and I have given him—but no matter, he is a good youth, and deserves it all."

There were to be seen people in the world who knew so little what was going on in it—ignorant people, who were bigoted to their own ways—as to say that Master Spencer had all these things from his youth up, and his father before him. These people might think that they knew well, the alchemist knew better, but Master Spencer knew best.

SPENCER MIDDLETON; OR, THE SQUIRE OF RIVER HILL.

BY GEORGE STANLEY, ESQ.

CHAPTER VII.

The Coroner's Inquest—Mr. Spatula.

ALL free, liberal, and enlightened levellers, not only of these days, but ever since levelling was invented—whether frequenters of mechanics' institutes or of the tap-room; readers of the delicate Globe or growling Chronicle, or devourers of the Tap-tub or the Dispatch—have been unanimous in selecting one standard—a sliding scale—to which, in their great kindness to the infirmities of human nature, they would reduce the entire race of men. That standard is one for which each of them retains the very highest degree of respect—a respect not temporary, but which begins with youth, and generally goes on to the grave. It is, *I myself*. They have no desire that any one should rise above that level, as perhaps it might render such persons too proud, or interfere with their own prospects. If, however, the world are willing to sink a little lower, why, the sooner the journey is over the better; and therefore, in a spirit of the purest philanthropy, they would extend to their neighbours a helping foot—their *non a priori* argument.

Such a leveller was Mr. Dionysius Spatula, formerly apothecary's boy in Longacre, where he swept the shop and stole Spanish liquorice; then deputy-under-sub-apothecary's assistant in the Borough, where he was particularly adroit in poisoning babies with oxalic acid; then, after passing through the successive changes of deputy-under-sub, under-deputy, and deputy, he rose to the full place of apothecary-in-chief in the Strand, now or late editor or proprietor of the "Blister," a diurnal medico-politico journal, and, at the moment of our tale, coroner for the county. Such a leveller was the coroner, that among all the dozens, ay hundreds, of articles he had written, and speeches he had made, he had never been known to propose, even theoretically, to exalt the lower classes to an equality with his own, though he had laboured diligently to reduce all such as were above him to his own standard.

This rule he would have carried out even to stature, and, Procrustes-like, have reduced all men to his measure—some five feet nothing. Indeed, Mr. Spatula was the picture of littleness. His head was small in proportion to any other person's whose height was within an eighth of an inch of the doctor's; his shoulders were small in proportion to his head; his body was small in proportion to its shoulders; his legs were small in proportion to the body they supported; and his

feet clearly proved that Mr. Dionyisus Spatula was "small by degrees and beautifully less."

Before we proceed further, let it be said, once for all, Mr. Spatula was very charitable—and charity covereth a multitude of sins.

The "Blister" was the making of Mr. Coroner Spatula. But for that, he might still have dispensed yards of diaculum and pounds of pills from behind his mahogany;—as it was, he raised the "Blister," and the "Blister" raised him. When the publication was first started, he contented himself with exposing the enormities committed by the porters and nurses at the hospitals; recorded, for the benefit of his readers, how Mrs. Deborah Curse, of St. Thomas's, had actually, with aristocratic brutality, told poor Mrs. Cornelius O'Brien, of Dirt and Gutter Alley, St. Giles's, that she, Mrs. Deborah Curse, wished that she, Mrs. Cornelius O'Brien, might get—thereby meaning that she should not have—a certain glass of gin and bitters, which the aforesaid Mrs. O'Brien had been desirous of taking after a certain black dose, in the "Blister" particularly described, in order to free herself from the unpleasant taste of her morning's draught. And then he would dilate on the peculations of porters and messengers, and reduce to a regular table, with proper averages, decimals, and per centums, the amount of diaculum, blue pill, and senna, actually stolen by one John Thompson, late footman to an episcopal or lordly governor, who, being a gentleman and a Tory, was peculiarly distasteful to the editor of the "Blister."

In consequence of his success in the sanatorial and nurse line—which might be called by some inveterate punster the porter and stout business—he determined on a more lofty flight; so he forthwith singled out an unfortunate dresser, who happened to depute his office to another pupil, who deputed it to a third, who, being extremely oblivious, diligently abstained from the performance of his arduous duties, lest through forgetfulness he should err, and also forgot to appoint his sub-deputy under-sub. Then he fell foul of a clinical clerk or two, one or more sub-surgeons, and, lastly, the chaplain of a western establishment, because he wore clean linen, drank port, and was an Oxonian. To conclude, he made a bold attack on the chief sawyers—the operatic surgeons—got into the King's Bench for a libel, and came out thence a medical martyr.

Martyrdom now-a-days is fashionable, and, like the influenza, catching. It is the sentimental measles of the age—the putrid fever of society in this nineteenth century. A little bandy-legged tailor of Duck-lane has a conscientious scruple about paying a church-rate; holds out manfully for two shillings and three farthings; goes to a meeting of an anti-pay-anything-to-anybody club, and to bed afterwards rather drunk; rises the next morning rather too seedy to work, and so determines on letting the "vile minion of a bloated and despotic prelacy seize the three-legged table, on which his frugal meal had often gladdened the craving appetites of his numerous and intelligent offspring;" and, in return for all these sufferings, receives a genteel annuity from the incorporated friends of Protestantism, and is handed down by the weeklies as a church-rate martyr.

Jeremiah Jenkins, strongly addicted to new rum, is suddenly con-

verted to the blessings of silken banners and tea and bun feasts ; cuts off his daily pint of liquor, and takes to bad tea and opium pills instead ; falls into a lethargic state ; becomes incapacitated for work ; and retires to a contract workhouse coffin—a teetotal martyr.

A tall spare artizan, who sticks on pins' heads by the thousand, drinks gin by the pint, and revels in a Socialist weekly, firmly persuaded of the truth of the doctrine that all men are equal—meaning thereby that no one should presume to be better off than himself—having failed to persuade the great landed proprietor of the neighbourhood of the truth of this first principle in modern political science, endeavours one dark night to throw a light upon the intricacies of the subject, through the medium of the squire's haystacks, or the millocrat's factory, falls under the ruthless hands of the yeomanry—"the bigoted adherents of a bigoted aristocracy"—see blood and murder gazette—and goes out to the Australian paradise—a Chartist martyr.

Were we to permit our disquisition to run its tether, old Fox would shrink into insignificance as to length, and hardly bear mentioning in the same month as to veracity.

But to return to Mr. Spatula. Among the many undoubted verities which that enlightened practitioner loved to inculcate, and for the practical developement of which he devoted his pen, his paper, and his patience, were two of paramount importance to the world and to himself—the necessity of ousting the lawyers from the coroner's seat of judgment in favour of the apothecaries, and also of sending Mr. Spatula himself to the Commons house of parliament, to enable him to reform everything, and to reduce into the tangible form of certain bills the various enlightened theories with which his mind was crowded. At the time during which we shall require the learned gentleman's presence at the Hog and Codfish, he was member of parliament for the borough of Rubbish, and coroner for the county.

"Good morning to you, gentlemen, good morning," said the coroner, as he ran rather than walked into the great room of the Hog and Codfish, some half hour after his appointed time. "Sorry to keep you waiting, gentlemen, but business is business."

"Very true, sir," replied Mr. Simpkins, the coroner's clerk—"very true, sir, indeed ; business is business."

"Yes," said Mr. Spatula. "Little do the world know what are the fatigues of a parliamentary career ; except to the silent vote, the aristocratic stripling, who votes according to his father's orders, it is a life of care, of toil—no Stagyrte's bed of roses."

"Sybarite," muttered Mr. Mouldy, the solicitor, who attended on behalf of Mr. Middleton to watch the proceedings.

"A second row behind the treasury-bench for a representative of the popular voice," continued the orator, and here he cast his eyes over a bundle of papers, tied with lawyer-like red tape, which he carried in his hand. "All these to be read, digested, convoluted, understood, before four o'clock. 'Bill for the encouragement of sudden deaths ;'—fine bill—fine bill that, Simpkins—my measure—my measure. 'Bill for repealing the law of libel as to daily publications ;'—humph—doubts about that measure—the 'Bible and Crown' very abusive of me last Monday—ah, but then the 'Blister'—must have a

clause excepting the political journals. 'Bill for washing chimney-sweepers on a Saturday night ;—pure, exalted, liberal philanthropy—will only require one chief commissioner, three deputies, and about fifteen hundred officers—some thirty or forty thousand a year—but what is that to seeing the dear little creatures as white as the snow-wreath which the winter storm hurries round the topmast branches of the giant oak, the lord of the deep-shadowing woods—humph—good simile—mark that, it will do to-night. 'Bill to increase the remuneration of county coroners ;—good bill, good bill—the labourer is worthy of his hire—good argument in case of coroners—very fallacious when cited by Mr. Churchman in support of the parliament religion—wonder what the honourable member for Downright meant by saying the devil could quote scripture to his own advantage.'

How long Mr. Spatula might have rambled on, it is impossible to say ; the clerk's preparations, however, being now complete, the coroner was obliged to bring to an end his half-told tale, in order to proceed with the inquest to view the body of the murdered servant.

On the return of the thirteen wise men, the inquiry commenced, and certain matters of fact were duly proved. After some of the initiatory circumstances of the event had been explained, Dr. McGillyflower, who had been summoned to view the body, was on the point of tendering the result of his *post mortem* examination, when Mr. Spatula, chancing to cast his eyes towards the right-hand corner of the room, espied sundry reporters of the daily papers diligently jotting down the proceedings of the inquest.

"Mr. Fielden," said the coroner, with a flushed face, addressing himself to the reporter of the leading morning journal, opposed both to the person and the principles of Mr. Spatula, and which had lately indulged in various pleasant remarks on the versatile coroner—"Mr Fielden, I must request you to leave the court."

"Leave the court, Mr. Coroner !—may I ask for what reason ?" inquired the astonished reporter.

"Because I please, sir," replied Spatula, with all the dignity of an insulted bantam. "My court is my own, sir, and I will not allow reporters in it."

"It is a public court," replied Mr. Fielden.

"It is not, sir ; my court is my own ; and I have a right to do what I like with my own."

"Very well, Mr. Coroner ; if you will exclude all reporters, I will readily depart," replied Mr. Fielden.

"I shall do as I please, sir," was Spatula's answer. "Do you think," he continued, "that I will permit the hired reporters of the press to garble my speeches, misrepresent my opinions, turn into ridicule my theories, and endeavour, by every species of malevolent, slanderous, and defamatory abuse, wickedly and maliciously to injure my good fame and credit, and to bring me into public scandal, infamy, and disgrace, and to cause me to be suspected and believed guilty of great villany." (Poor man, he had so often seen the common form of a declaration in a libel, that the words ran in his head.) "Never will I allow the hired minions of a despotic aristocracy to call in question the spotless fame that always has belonged to the coroner of this

county. No, Mr. Speaker—no, sir ; never will I permit the rights of the press to be trampled upon—to call in question my abilities—to—to—Leave the room, Mr. Fielden.”

“ Good morning, Mr. Coroner. You may depend that your eloquent address shall be reported verbatim. Good morning, Mr. Dionysius Spatula.”

“ Was there ever such insolence ?” muttered Mr. Spatula. “ Such is the effect of the mildewing principles of feudal prejudice, combined with the love of that filthy lucre for which the scribbling minion, greatly envying the happy condition of the said plaintiff—bah, there’s that declaration in libel again—call the next witness, Mr. Simpkins.”

Mr. Spatula having at length perceived that he had travelled beyond his record, and astonished his auditors at the expense of time and patience, recovered his seat, and proceeded to vent the remainder of his anger on his old friend, Dr. M’Gilliflower, the medical witness.

Besides certain deep-seated and most particularly private reasons, which it is impossible now to discover, there were three most prominent and evident why Mr. Coroner Spatula should endeavour to annoy, and if possible render ridiculous, Mr. medical witness M’Gilliflower. In the first place, when Mr. Spatula went up for his examination at the Hall, he got plucked, and the plucker was Dr. M’Gilliflower ; secondly, when Mr. Spatula bent the whole terrors of the daily Blister on John Thompson, some time footman to the Lord Bishop of Dash, and afterwards porter at St. Bartholomew’s, Dr. M’Gilliflower, then surgeon of the hospital, threw his protecting ægis over the porter, and not only refused to entertain the charge, but civilly hinted at a criminal prosecution of the editor of the Blister ; and thirdly, lastly, though not least, it was not many years ago that, for reasons registered in his Majesty’s Court of Common Pleas, in a certain cause depending therein between the aforesaid doctor and the aforesaid coroner, the said coroner had to pay to the said doctor the sum of two hundred pounds, lawful money of Great Britain, as damages for a slanderous and scurrilous libel on the said doctor, and also the sum of seventy-five pounds fifteen shillings and sixpence for costs incurred by the plaintiff in the prosecution of the said libel.

“ Stop,” said Mr. Spatula to the officer, as he was proceeding to swear the witness. “ I must request you, Dr. M’Gilliflower, to answer me a question or two first.”

The doctor stared, and bowed assent.

“ Do you believe in a God, sir ?” asked the coroner, with a sneer.

“ I trust I do,” replied the doctor, reverently.

“ Be kind enough not to equivocate, sir,” replied Spatula—“ plain yes or no.”

“ Equivocate, sir ?”

“ Answer my question, sir—plain yes or no.”

“ Yes,” answered the doctor, with a look of ineffable contempt at the spiteful coroner.

“ Do you know the nature of an oath ?” asked Spatula.

“ Yes.”

“ O, well, I suppose you may be sworn,” replied the coroner, with a very patronizing air. “ Simpkins, swear Dr. M’Gilliflower.”

So the doctor was sworn, and proceeded to give his evidence.

He had first examined the body, and discovered a considerable burn on the left breast, corresponding to another in the servant's waistcoat ; in the middle of the burn was a small perforation, made by the bullet, which might be traced entirely through the body to a corresponding aperture beneath the right blade-bone ; that the bullet was discovered among the clothes of the bed over which the servant's body had fallen ; and that death had been caused by the passage of the ball through certain vital parts, to which he gave certain very hard and long names, in its course through the body.

"How do you know, Dr. M'Gilliflower," asked the coroner, "that the perforations were caused by the passage of a bullet?"

"From the appearance of the edges of the wounds, and from the facts of the burn, the firing of the pistol, and the finding of the bullet."

"O, then, because you are told that a pistol has been fired by somebody, and you find a man with a burn on his body, and a bullet near him, you determine he died by this bullet?"

"I have already stated my reasons," replied the witness, mildly and firmly.

"O then you refuse to answer?"

"No, sir, I do not."

"Pray, Dr. M'Gilliflower, have you ever seen bullet wounds before?"

"Yes, many."

"Have you seen a hundred?"

"I should think not."

"Have you seen fifty?" asked the coroner.

"I should think not."

"Have you seen twenty?" reiterated the coroner.

"Very likely," replied Dr. M'Gilliflower, getting rather warm.

"Plain yes or no, sir."

"I cannot exactly say," replied the doctor.

"Plain yes or no, sir," reiterated the coroner, delighted at his success.

"Then no, sir," replied M'Gilliflower.

"Thank you, Dr. M'Gilliflower—I believe we shall not want your evidence any more—good morning," said the coroner. "Call the next witness."

Martha was now called and sworn. Apparently overcome with grief at the loss of her master, she made dexterous use of her handkerchief, by which means, and the assistance of a very downcast and modest deportment, she created a considerable sensation among the members of the inquest.

Overcome with watching and want of rest—so she said—she had fallen into a half kind of sleep opposite the fire, when she was disturbed by the breaking in of the door of the chamber. Turning round, she saw two men in dark fustian dresses and black masks, one of whom immediately seized and pinioned her to her chair, with her face to the fire, placed a gag in her mouth, and ordered her to keep still under pain of death. She then heard the bureau forced, and a

rattling of money, quickly followed by the noise of footsteps on the stairs. Then all seemed confusion ;—she heard blows and a heavy fall, a confused noise of struggling, the report of a pistol, hurried footsteps down stairs, and then all quiet until she was released by one of the previous witnesses, and discovered Sampson lying lifeless across the dead body of her master.

"Dead body of your master !" repeated the coroner, pricking up his ears at the nurse's last words—"dead body of your master ! How did he die ?—what of ?"

"I found him dead when we removed poor Sampson."

"How's this, how's this ?" exclaimed Mr. Spatula—"died suddenly—found dead, and no inquest ! Simpkins," (to his officer,) "have you summoned another inquest ?"

"No, if you please sir, I had no notice."

"Nonotice ! Another instance of smothering inquiry," said the coroner.

"Mr. Middleton, sir," suggested Mr. Mouldy, the attorney, "had been an invalid, indeed in a dying state, some days, and therefore it was not thought necessary to summon an inquest."

"Necessary or not necessary, I am to judge of that, sir ; and the rights of the public and of coroners shall not be violated during my reign. Simpkins, summon another inquest, and remember I will sit on every person who dies suddenly."

"Yes," muttered Mouldy, "he'd sit on his grandmother's tom cat, if he died in convulsions, for a guinea a day, and eighteenpence a mile for posting."

"Silence in the court," cried Spatula, looking very warm and angry as he caught the import of the solicitor's observation.

"Before the witness leaves the box, I wish to ask her one or two questions, Mr. Coroner," said Mouldy.

"Questions, questions—what's the good of more questions ?" snapped the coroner.

"I think it necessary."

"O, very well ; of course, if *you* wish it," replied Spatula, throwing himself back on his chair, and proceeding to read one of his many pet bills.

"You say that two men broke into your master's room ?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you ever see either of those men before ?"

"They had black masks on," replied the nurse.

"Do you mean to say that no part of their faces was visible ?"

"Of course she does," cut in the coroner.

The solicitor repeated his question, without seeming to notice the interruption.

"Yes," replied Martha, taking the cue from Mr. Spatula.

"Were the masks at all like this one ?" said Mouldy, exhibiting a narrow handkerchief mask, merely covering the mouth, and which had been torn from the squire during the struggle with the servant, and found in the room after the flight of the robbers.

Martha looked a little discomposed, and at last stammered out a sort of half assent, whilst Spatula took a far-off view of the relic through his gold eyeglass.

"Do you know a person called Mark Redmond?" asked Mouldy, looking very hard at the witness.

"I believe I do," murmured Martha, trying to feel, or at least to look, as if she felt very faint.

"When did you see him last?"

"I don't know," sobbed the nurse.

Mouldy, being affected with a fit of unbelief, repeated the question.

"She tells you she does not know," said the coroner very sharply, not taking the trouble to raise his eyes from one of his pet bills, through the many clauses of which he was busily moving them.

"How long since?" asked Mouldy, not heeding the coroner's hint.

"Some time," said Martha, slightly encouraged by the interference of the learned doctor.

"Some time since," said Mouldy, dropping out the words, and watching Martha as a cat would a lamed mouse. "Some—time—since: did you or did you not see Mark Redmond on the morning of the day on which your master died?"

"I don't remember—at least—perhaps I might have," faintly ejaculated Martha, now beginning to feel really unwell, and very far from pleased with her position.

"Had you any conversation with him?"

"Hearsay evidence, hearsay evidence is not admissible," said the coroner, looking over-pleased, in having, as he thought, caught the lawyer at fault. "You must not inquire what he said."

"I am perfectly well aware of that, Mr. Coroner. Now, Mrs. Martha Smith, will you tell me whether you had any conversation with the man Mark at your last meeting with him," said Mouldy, with a cool sneer at the disappointed Spatula.

"I believe I might," replied Martha.

"Did you inform him of the fact of your master having made his will on the previous evening?"

"I believe I might," replied Mrs. Smith, with a most piteous look at the coroner, unfortunately entirely thrown away, as the learned medico M. P. was just at that moment busily engaged in filling up the blanks in his new bill, "to increase the remuneration of county coroners," by simply adding 5 per cent. to the old fees.

"Now, Mrs. Smith, did the man Mark give you a small vial containing medicine for your master?"

Mrs. Martha Smith, clearly perceiving that matters were taking a very unpleasant turn, and that, by some means or other, the conversation with Redmond had not been so secret as she had supposed, determined, as a "dernier resort," to have a real faint. Accordingly, she no sooner heard the last question in a due course of repetition by the solicitor, than she caused her eyes to roll gradually round the room, and then to fix with awful intensity on Mr. Spatula; concluding the exhibition by sliding down on her back, and drumming the Rogue's March on the floor with her heels.

Mr. Spatula's old medical habits burst forth on the moment; he threw down his dear bills, routed out his lancets, and was by the side of the senseless witness in half a minute, perfectly prepared to bleed, bleed, bleed, to the last drop. Mr. Mouldy, well aware that nothing

more could be on this occasion elicited from the witness, and sufficiently satisfied in his suspicions to prompt him to continue his researches after the lost will, permitted Martha to be carried out of the court ; and Spatula, having resigned his new patient into the hands of the village apothecary, returned to his judicial seat to sum up the evidence and charge the inquest.

Not being readers of the *Early Purl*, the only paper whose reporter was allowed to be present during the inquest, it is impossible to present to our friends a full, true, and particular account of the learned doctor's speech. Our memory, however, will supply us with the heads of that remarkable oration—an oration as remarkable for its length as for the variety of the topics introduced into it—and what it must have been, we shall be able to guess, when we remember its effect on the twelve jurymen as demonstrated in the verdict.

The learned coroner commenced his address, by informing the jury that they were to determine why John Sampson died—from that point he took a short excursion into the nature of life and death, advocated a little materialism and freethinking, gave a few sneers at religion and its ministers, and came back rather out of breath to the evidence of the early witnesses. From this he once more digressed into his favourite subject, the election of medical coroners, and spoke of the goddess of anatomy and medicine sitting enthroned on the pedestal whence the idol of legal chicanery had been ignominiously hurled. He then proceeded to consider Dr. McGilliflower's evidence, commenting upon the absolute necessity of the legislative wisdom—so M. P.'s always talk of themselves—enacting that all doctors and surgeons should proceed regularly from shop-boys to shop-men, from shop-men to masters, and from masters to physicians or surgeons. “A pistol,” he said, was heard, one of the combatants was found dead, his body was pierced through, a bullet was found in the room, but there was no evidence to prove who fired the pistol, or whether it was a pistol at all, or whether the pistol was loaded, or whether, if loaded, with the ball which had been found, or whether the ball already found, or the supposed pistol, in any way had contributed to the death of the servant. At this part of his charge, Mr. Spatula looked with surprising dignity at Mr. Mouldy, thinking that he was laying down a legal judgment on the evidence, and was greatly surprised at the grave smile which played over the solicitor's countenance. He then eulogized the nurse Martha, spoke of her evident sufferings in her master's cause, of the cruelty of attempting to confound witnesses by legal subtleties, and then went off into a general harangue on the acute feelings of the lower classes, the devotion of poor men to their rich tyrants, and the cold, unfeeling, uncharitable, unchristian conduct of the aristocracy—the entire excursus being the greater part of the learned gentleman's last harangue at the Cat and Whistle, on the enormities of New Bastiles, water-gruel, dry rooms, and clean beds. Mr. Spatula, in conclusion, after alluding to Draco's sanguinary code—Norfolk Island, the Hulks, and solitary confinement, and informing his jury and the audience in general of his view of punishments, and how that he would punish murderers by transportation for life, informed the twelve wise men, that after the luminous manner in which

the evidence had been summed up by him, and the elaborate way in which he had laid down the common sense of the affair, they would not be many minutes in returning their verdict.

After some short consultations among themselves, the jury requested, much to the coroner's surprise, to be allowed to retire, and it was not until nearly three quarters of an hour had elapsed that they returned and gave in, through their foreman, the following sensible verdict.

"We find that John Sampson came to his death by a pistol, but there is no evidence to prove that the pistol was loaded—we also find the prisoner guilty of transportation for life."

After Mr. Spatula had explained to the enlightened twelve that their verdict was rather wrong, and that there was not any prisoner in the case, and also furnished them with a proper form, they once more deliberated and found, that "John Sampson came to his death from a pistol, but that there was no evidence to prove by whom the same was fired." And this verdict having been duly registered, the assembly departed to their several works, and restored the Hog and Codfish to its usual state of peaceful tranquillity.

CHAPTER VIII.

Our Hero determines to reform and retrench, and thereby obtains some slight insight into the sayings and doings of certain inhabitants of the city of Oxford.

WHILST Spencer, in accordance with the suggestions conveyed to him by his father, in the letter which we have lately read, was making up his mind to submit with the best possible grace to the freaks which fortune seemed likely to play him, and, by resolutely applying his shoulder to the wheel, to extricate himself from his difficulties, the Oxford world was studiously employed in speculating, asserting, contradicting, and deciding on the vastness of the wealth, the number of the acres, the rental of the lands, the stateliness of the mansions, the hundreds of pictures and the cupboards of plate, to which *their fortunate* Oxonian was immediately to succeed.

"By the living Jingo," lisped the hopeful scion of the house of Mowbray, gentleman commoner of our hero's college; "by the living Jingo," he elegantly repeated, as he read the death of old Aubrey Middleton in the columns of the Grunticle, "the old 'un has hopped the twig, and the old tory parson and the infant Hercules—Spencer's nickname—will come the don over us."

The news was rapidly and extensively circulated; cards came through the letter-box at a most rapid pace; the reverend the president's blue and yellow servant made anxious inquiries after Mr. Middleton's health; the common-room man brought the common-room's compliments and inquiries on the same subject; the senior tutor sent his scout to say he hoped Mr. Middleton would not over-excite himself by attending his lectures; whilst the Dean remitted his last week's imposition, and voluntarily gave him a *carte blanche* for the next seven days. To his friends Davis and Hamilton the whole affair was a matter of perfect astonishment, especially when they contrasted our hero's previous account of his prospects with

the reserved manner in which he received the congratulations of his friends and his acquaintances, and seemed studiously to throw cold water on all the many fine compliments which his rumoured good fortune had brought upon him. Bad news always travels fast, and more especially so when treading on the heels of more pleasing intelligence. Doubts began to be expressed; newspapers began to set out dark paragraphs; and when the full account of the inquest appeared in the *Early Purl*, accompanied with a little special relation from their own correspondent of the supposed loss of the will, hints grew into assertions. At last, it was not to be denied that a nearer heir than our hero was in existence—had put in his claim—nay more, some said had taken possession of Riverhill—had been claimed by the Cap of Liberty as one of *the people*—and unless the will turned up in answer to the proffered reward, was likely to remain in possession. Round went the weathercock. The cards ceased; the president's blue and yellow did not make his morning call; the tutor requested Mr. Middleton's attendance at lecture, and tried to find fault with his construing, and took especial care to disagree with and cavil at everything he said or did; the dean became religiously particular about morning chapels; and the youthful scion of the Mowbray tree passed his dear friend Spencer without recognizing him, through his shortsightedness; whilst the duns, quick-sighted, or quick-scented as the vulture, came pouncing down on all sides, each eager to have first pick at the fallen prey.

"Indeed it is too true, Hamilton," said our hero, as he sat over his college fire, and endeavoured to charm away his melancholy by the conversation of Hamilton and Davis, assisted by a bottle of old port. "Indeed it is too true, we are ruined; the will which my poor uncle had executed in our favour has been stolen, and although a reward has been offered, we have not got on its scent yet; the heir, a son of my uncle the priest, has claimed, and, as we have not right to resist, must turn us out forthwith; indeed, my mother and Emily have already gone to the parsonage at Wicherly, and my father waits but to deliver up the keys before he joins them."

"The fall is great," said Gerard, "but yet there is the vicarage to retire on."

"A mere trifle about three hundred a year, and besides this—nothing."

"Nothing!" exclaimed the friends.

"Literally nothing. My mother, you perhaps know, was the daughter of a poor country clergyman; the small portion which my father inherited must all be sold to pay off the last quarter's expenses at the hall, and to help me out of my debts."

"Expenses at the hall?"

"Yes—as my uncle died before his usual day for payment of his handsome allowance, everything falls on my father."

"Most inequitable—but I suppose legal," replied Hamilton.

"Of course it is," grumbled Tom Davis, knocking the white ash from his third cigar,—“of course it is strictly legal,—I never knew a hard case that was not strictly legal."

"But your debts, Spencer—surely they cannot be very large," said Gerard Hamilton.

"Perhaps not as the heir to Riverhill, but very heavy as only the poor but extravagant son of a poor vicar," replied Spencer.

"What's their amount?" inquired Hamilton.

"Much more than I expected—some two hundred and over."

"Humph," said Hamilton, "humph—pretty well for about two months; but come, what do you propose doing?"

"Selling off everything here, paying all I owe, or at least as far as I can, and leaving Oxford for ever."

"That will not do," replied Hamilton; "you must not think of leaving; where else, and in what other way, can you expect to get on?"

"If very lucky, I may obtain a clerkship in a counting-house."

"Ay, and keep a cat, send tommy out to the Sandwich Islands, and set up as a modern Whittington," said the incorrigible Tom.

"No, no," said Hamilton, "business is not suited for you—you must stay here."

"I would willingly, if I possibly could—but the expense would be ruinous—ridiculous."

"You must do this—give up being a gentleman commoner; get out of your present expensive rooms, ask for and obtain the bible clerkship which Hitchins resigns next term, ascend to his garrets, pay off your debts from the produce of your furniture, and make up your mind to work hard for a class, and live on the proceeds of your bible clerkship."

"Willingly, willingly, Hamilton, if it can be done," exclaimed Spencer.

"It shall be done—my cousin the vice-president has already hinted to me that the clerkship is at your service if you will apply for it—you say your debts are about two hundred pounds—well, your rooms—Tom Mowbray wants them—will produce half that; can you reasonably expect to be able to provide the rest?"

Spencer expressed his doubts.

"Very well, then—something else must be done—tell your duns that I guarantee your debts."

"And I'll go your halves," said Davis. "Come, come, Spencer boy," he continued, "don't look so miserable; it will not ruin either of us if you don't pay at all; and if you do, why, confound it, where are we the worse for it after all?—why, I feel more comfortable now."

"Thank you, thank you, my dear friends," gasped our hero.

"Why, hang it, Spencer," said Davis, "who has a right to be friends if we have not? Hamilton used to lick you at Boxington for not fetching the porter quick enough, and I used to lick him in return—so you see there's some use in fagging after all."

"Can I live on the clerkship?" inquired Spencer, relieved by Davis's good-humoured kindness.

"Yes, I think you can," replied Gerard. "Eighty pounds in cash, some odd pounds for drawing up testimonials, a weekly allowance in your battels, and no room rent, will go very far towards keeping you—at least if you are careful."

"O, easily—easily," exclaimed Spencer.

"Steady, Spencer—there's tutoring."

"Pooh, Gerard," said Davis, "free gratis to scholars and bible clerks."

"Pooh, Tom—not college tutoring, that is never worth five per cent. of the money—a private coach, Davis."

"O surely I can do without a private tutor," said our hero.

"Hardly, for honours; you might, perhaps, in classics—you would not in mathematics, and on the whole you'll do better with one."

"It must not be thought of," said Spencer.

"Yes, it must—if you will be content with a double second, who will undertake to work you up to his maximum, and thereby enable you to go on further."

"And fare worse," muttered Davis.

"As the matter may be, Tom—why, as I have an hour to spare on Mondays and Fridays, if you'll come to me—we'll adjourn the rest until a future day."

"Indeed I cannot—I cannot."

"You not only can, but you will, Spencer; and so let me see you at my rooms at seven A. M. on Friday," replied Gerard deliberately.

"I'm afraid I can't offer to run in couples with Gerard," said Tom, with a peculiar twist of the right corner of his mouth, contemporaneously with his right eyelid.

"How can I ever sufficiently thank you both?" said our hero, quite overcome by his feelings.

"By letting me see your bills," replied Davis.

"And by getting a double second at least, and a double first, if you can," said Hamilton.

"Come, Spencer," said Davis, unrolling the formidable pile of unpaid bills which our hero produced according to his friend's request—"come, my boy, let us see who is first among the selecti? Messrs. Daub and Stipple, High-street. Prints, of course—everybody has a taste now-a-days."

"Yes," observed Hamilton, "there is a little devil on every one's shoulder, whispering, 'have a taste,' and in consequence the mania for all sorts of pictures and engravings, from five shilling Zoraidas, or 'Nature's favourites,' to five guinea kings, queens, and dukes, is decidedly on the increase; and the immense amount of second-rate copies of second-rate engravings got rid of in this place at first-rate prices, would astonish every one who does not consider that in the majority of the bargains the seller has a sharp head, and the buyer firmly believes in the supremacy of his taste and the accuracy of his eye in works of art."

"And besides that very philosophical reason, there's the notable science and practice of trouting."

"Trouting, Davis! what on earth is trouting?" asked our hero and Gerard together.

"First cousin to soaping—soft sawdaring—et id genus omne—tickling your consequence, as you tickle a sleepy trout on a hot day."

"As how, Tom?" asked Hamilton.

"O just this way," replied Davis, settling down for a story. "Have you a copy of the 'Bride of Abydos?' says a tolerably fresh Oxonian,

as he lounges into our friends Daub and Stipple, in hopes of wasting a few moments, escaping the proctor, or securing to himself a copy of the favourite sister, cousin, or lady-love of Mr. Rubens Brush, whom the said Mr. Rubens Brush has made to do duty as a Minna—Miranda—Bride, and several other of the so-called portraits of the female beauties of Byron, Shakspeare, Scott, or Milton ; and which happen to recal to our freshman's mind his last new partner at the last county ball, or the blooming Patty, the rosy-cheeked daughter of the portly landlord of the Cow and Trumpet in Witney. 'O certainly, sir,' replies the obsequious Daub, opening a fat portfolio of prints of beauties, babies, and brides ; and as he diligently spreads them over the table, bobbing and smiling at each successive print, and bursting out into an encomiastic flourish at any face that seems to take with the poor 'fish.' Three times as many faces as were asked for having been selected, the fish asks for change for a note. He always pays ready money—"

"And very wise, too," observed Spencer, with a melancholy look.

"Very foolish ; why, the chances are ten to one against your taking a receipt, and then in goes the print, or whatever it may be, to the ledger against you, and you are no better off than if you had never paid for it at all," replied Hamilton.

"Maybe it may," said Davis. "But to our fish. Whilst Daub is looking for change, of course he lounges about the shop, and pokes his eyeglass at every print and painting. 'Fine print that, sir,' says the fisherman, as he finds his fish staring at a first-rate Burnet, or a Raphael Morghen. 'Yes, very fine indeed,' replies the viridis homo ; 'the eye catches the lights well, and is never diverted from the main object—the principal figure of the group.' 'A very correct view of the case, sir ; three and two are five—rising rapidly in price, sir—and five is ten—our last copy—and three makes five pounds, sir—very cheap, sir—only fifteen guineas.' 'Very cheap, indeed,' replies the fish, 'a very beautiful copy.' 'Will you allow me to send it you?' 'Why, I should never be able to pay for it.' 'O pray don't talk of payment, sir ; money's no object to us, sir,—any time that will suit you, sir,—should be glad if you owed us a hundred pounds. Mr. Browning of Christchurch, I believe,' continues the adroit angler, gradually playing his fish, and at last jerking him high and dry on the bank, and thereby booking the said picture to the said freshman, and the said freshman for fifteen guineas, and as a good catch for some future day's sport. The bows with which he ushers the poor captive out of his shop are as many and as profound as if he were performing the interesting ceremony of the kow-tow before Tieng-lang-King-lang-Locho, the great grandfather of the sun, moon, and all the stars. 'Five guineas a term will soon clear off that score,' mutters the fish as he lounges up St. Aldate's, entirely oblivious of the fact, that he has already twice, if not three times before, appropriated a similar sum, if not the self-same one, mentally at least, to the liquidation of some earlier and more lively 'ticks.'"

"Is that all that comes of the tickling?" asked Spencer.

"O no, Tom has hardly put him to sleep yet, he'll land him soon," said Hamilton ; "he's getting up his steam for the next train ; whirr, whirr, whiz, whiz—off."

"Well," continued Davis, "terms roll on, and pictures roll in. 'A pet lamb,' a 'Duke' or two, a 'Nature,' and half-a-score more 'Clara de Guzmans' and 'Imoindas,' tend to swell the account; but still the day for payment seems, and is in reality, studiously and intentionally deferred by Messrs. Daub and Stipple, who firmly and in a most fascinating manner refuse any partial liquidation of the bill, greatly preferring a fresh order for one sovereign to a check for five. In one of the summer terms, a delicate note informs the victim, that, by the kind permission of the painter or the publisher, Sir Theophilus Megilp's last picture will be shown to their numerous friends by Messrs. D. and S. for two days only, previous to its being committed to the hands of that talented engraver, Mr. Copperplate Scratchface. Of course, such an opportunity is not to be lost, consequently Mr. Browning, multis cum aliis, strolls down to spear at the canvass, and to his unwonted astonishment returns a registered future proprietor of a proof impression of Mr. Scratchface's engraving of Sir Theophilus Megilp's most talented picture, 'The Toad in a Hole,' to be delivered to subscribers early in July."

"Well, Davis, but at any rate they give immense credit," observed our hero.

"Just the contrary, Spencer," said Hamilton; "they charge long credit prices on the score of a far-off day of reckoning, and contrive to call in their money within a year and a half, or even less."

"By what means?" asked Spencer.

"By convenient losses, sham dissolutions of partnership, and make-up bankruptcies," said Hamilton.

"Exactly as my friend Mr. Trout Browning discovered, when his account had swelled to some forty odd pounds, and the long vacation had set in and given the duns time to be troublesome," said Tom Davis, trying to continue his tale.

"Ay, I suppose Messrs. D. and S.," said Gerard, "dissolved partnership, having never entered into it, or Mr. Daub died conveniently, at least on paper, or even in *the paper*; or their London agent went off to America, as his employers relate, and compelled them to call in their debts."

"I forget exactly which it was—but we'll set it down as a dissolution case," said Tom.

"What a number of interesting circumstances generally attend these sad affairs! human nature appears under her most attractive form," moralized Hamilton.

"Interesting circumstances—human nature—attractive form," exclaimed his friends.

"Ay, you may doubt, and you may sneer. But so great a respect has Mr. Daub for Mr. Stipple, that, though the latter has treated the former with unexampled barbarity, and compelled him to dissolve their long and lucrative partnership, yet he still retains him as his foreman, heads his bills and notices with the old names, and retains the original firm over the shop front."

"Supposing it is a case of convenient death?" suggested Spencer.

"O then, although poor Mr. Daub has died, much to his partner's pain and grief, yet, wondrous to relate, he has left behind him a twin

brother, whom he has recommended to Mr. Stipple, so wondrously like him in voice, look, size, and manner, that every one is tempted to ask him whether he is himself or his brother."

"Well then, suppose the town agent has run," said Davis, anxious to finish off Gerard and get to work again himself.

"Why then," said Gerard, "though Mr. Adams of Barbican has fled across the herring-pond, yet he has left a brother or cousin of the same name, a most honourable man, who carries on his business, and is Messrs. Daub and Stipple's agent, at the same address and with the self-same christian and surname as before."

"Whatever the cause may chance to be," said Davis, returning to his story, "the accounts are placed in the hands of Mr. Thomas Screw, jun., accountant, who forthwith sends certain loving epistles to the debtors. By one of these epistles Mr. Browning is informed that Mr. T. Screw is empowered by Messrs. Daub and Stipple—in consequence of their dissolution of partnership—to apply for the *immediate* payment of the sum of 49*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*, the amount of his account with the above firm, and is requested to pay the same within seven days to Messrs. Coutts and Co., Mr. T. Screw's bankers. On the receipt of this kind invitation, (which too often is but one of many of a like nature, as *the Long* is the rife time for dunning by these means such men as they look upon as nearly drawn dry, 'dead men.')

Mr. Browning cogitates for a day or two whether he can muster up the ready, and having nine times out of ten decided in the negative, informs Mr. Screw that he is sorry that he cannot have the pleasure of at present settling his account, but hopes to be able to do so on his return in October. At the same time, he hints to his correspondent that he is rather astonished at the application, as Messrs. D. and S. had so frequently refused to let him settle the account in the last term, and also suggests that although he has subscribed for a proof of the 'Toad in a Hole,' a proof of which he finds included in the account, yet that he has not as yet received his copy; and after all this, he is his obediently, R. Browning."

"You must have taken that letter from my room," said Spencer.

"Not he," said Hamilton; "it's an old one of mine."

"Both wrong, and both right," replied Davis; "it's neither yours alone, Spencer, nor yours, Gerard, nor mine; but it's common property to all, and to three-fourths of the university besides. Why, I should not wonder if you laid claim to the answer to it—here it is—"

'Oxford, July 20.

'Sir,

'Your copy of the 'Toad in a Hole' has been set aside for you, and will be sent to your residence on your undertaking to pay the expenses, or delivered to you on your return to Oxford. I am very sorry, that, in consequence of a settlement of the accounts of the firm being *imperatively* demanded, no delay can be permitted in the payment of your debt; and, therefore, you have only yourself to thank if, after seven days from this, you compel me, through neglect of payment, to resort to legal means to compel the settlement of your long-standing account.

'Your obedient servant,

'THOMAS SCREW, JUN.'"

"O, I'd swear to a dozen of them," said Hamilton.

"Well, to cut the matter short," continued Tom Davis, "Mr. B. being now 'super viridem frondem, alias 'up a tree,' rather than confide his difficulties to his friends, offers about a third down, and to pay five per cent. on the rest, hoping to clear off scores at Christmas. Now, as Mr. Screw and his clients only want to get a firm hold of their debtor, preparatory to further plucking, the former gentleman informs him that he has no doubt Messrs. D. and S. will be satisfied with the present stumping up of the said third part, if he will give them his bill for the remainder, with some five or six pounds for interest, stamp, and expenses of Mr. Screw and clerks, payable three months after date, and of course the bill is given. So far, so good. Now, as the bill is illegal, according to the statutes of the dons, it is forthwith handed over at about two-thirds, or half-price, to some third person, entirely unconnected with the university, and having no fear of the vice-chancellor, and all the horrors of discommonizing before his eyes."

"And what on earth," asked Spencer, "is that discommonizing?"

"Cancelling his matriculation and license to cheat and dun, and visiting any unfortunate who buys of him with impositions, rustication, or expulsion, as the matter may be," was Hamilton's reply.

"In about a month, this new hand ferrets out the acceptor, and threatens him with putting his bill or bills into immediate circulation, unless either paid before date, or accommodated with another bill for a larger sum and a shorter period than the other: the leader of a long file of accommodation papers, each successive one larger and shorter than its predecessor, until at last the acceptor is so hemmed in on every side, that he gets rusticated, expelled, or lodged in the county jail, unless he is wise enough to tell all to his governor, and he is courageous enough to bring the whole tribe into court, and expose their tricks, at some expense, and no little anxiety; and so ends the matter with the poor fish."

"And, Lord have mercy on his soul!" as the old treasurer of the Middle Temple used to say when he had to congratulate the new wigs on their being called to the bar," said Hamilton with a grave smile.

"Live and learn; I shall steer clear of trouting next time," said our hero.

"Yes, and tumble into some one else's net. You must get up over night to outwit an Oxford tradesman," said Gerard; "look at that nice trick of selling their small accounts."

"Selling their accounts!" exclaimed Spencer, hardly alive to the trick.

"Ay, selling their accounts—their small matters of two and three pounds that it would hurt their credit with the men to dun for—these they dispose of to some pettifogging attorney for a valuable consideration, who immediately deluges you with writs, and as the debtors have no defence, obtains the money and his costs into the bargain."

"Why, Stanley had fifteen writs from the same attorney in one day," said Davis, "and compounded for the whole affair for fifty pounds, three-fifths of which were costs."

"Bankruptcies are not such bad things after all," said Hamilton;

"they pay sometimes. You remember Smithers, the pastrycook of St. Aldgate's—he went smash one day, and I owed him some five or six pounds. In a day or two he called on me, and asked for his money; luckily I heard he was a bankrupt, so I refused him. 'Why not?' said he, trying to look big. 'Because you're a bankrupt,' said I. 'Then you won't pay?' 'Yes, your assignees.' 'Damn my assignees. 'O certainly, if you wish,' I replied as I shut the door after him, and you too.' Well, I never heard of that bill again."

"What, not from the assignees," said Spencer.

"Devil a bit—the old rogue had written me off as paid in his ledger, in order that he might pick up a few stray accounts, and cheat his creditors. So, as I would not pay him, he dared not tell his assignees of the cheat, and I got my term's ices for nothing."

"There's one comfort in being in difficulties," said Spencer.

"What's that?"

"You escape those horrid touters—you're not worth bothering."

"O, the inimitable grace with which they bob and bow," said Hamilton, "as they come into your room, and request to be allowed to show you some new waistcoat patterns just fresh from London, and the persevering industry with which they cover your sofa with valencias and satins, velvets and checks, the rejected of St. James and Bond Streets, and step back to catch a particular light on a shot silk, or a peculiar shade of a violent check. O, it's a perfect study!"

"And if you are not wide awake, it is not many minutes before you are booked for a rapid vest and a pair of inexpressibles, such as Oxford men alone wear, a cross between a green baize and a horse-cloth. The only way is to take it patiently, look on calmly until the touter has covered the sofa and a chair or two with his patches and remnants, then take up your cap, wish him good morning, walk off, and leave the deputy-stitch to bless your eyes and pack up his shreds and patches," said Davis.

"Well," said Spencer, "you may laugh at our men's dressing, but at least it is manly, and not too dandyish."

"Why, how do you think I saw a Cambridge man dressed not three months since in King's Chapel?"

"The devil only knows," muttered Tom, *sotto voce*.

"First, polished leather boots with paper soles, then, to ascend gradually, fair white ducks tightly strapped down over his feet, a richly open embroidered shirt, no waistcoat, his shirt collars worked round the edges, and turned down *à la* Byron, a rich satin tie very narrow and very gay, with a pin big enough for a giant, a white blouse made to fit tight, his embroidered shirt-cuffs turned very far back, his long black hair parted in the middle, and hanging down with a half-turn on each side, called a curl; and, to complete the affair, lemon-coloured gloves, and a whalebone cane with large gold head, and an embryo moustache."

"Ay, looking as if he had borrowed his old nail-brush for the day, and stuck it over his lip to look fierce," said Davis with a laugh; "how he must have harmonized with the glorious old building!"

"Not so bad either—they were both specimens of the over-decorated English," said Spencer.

"Are you very busy now, Gerard?" asked Davis, with a thoughtful air.

"Not over head and ears—only a four-in-hand team at present—one logic, two great goes, and a little-go euclidist. But why do you ask?"

"Why, I was thinking that if you and I were to put together our reminiscences of certain sayings and doings of certain shopkeepers in this classic place, we might concoct a book worthy of the Clarendon, and of being recommended by the Golgotha for freshmen's lectures."

"Ay, and call it 'Town and Gown, or Credit Crumbs for Sucking Batchelors,' with a motto of 'Keep your receipts,' and a finis, or tale-piece proverb of 'Never show them to duns,'" replied Hamilton.

"Why not?" asked Spencer.

"Because," replied Hamilton, "in this classic city few tricks are more frequently and successfully practised than trusting to the loss of receipts by careless men, and testing their carefulness, or *vice versa*, by an early and second delivery of the small account. *Ergo*, never show a dun a receipt, but throw the burden of the proof on him, as very often, when it has been accidentally lost, the dun's conscience, or rather his fear, will be as good as a stamped receipt in full."

"I can well imagine that," replied Spencer.

"Ay, and if you had seen Jeremy Botham, when he caught sight of his receipt in the vice's court, you would have recognized the benefit of Hamilton's bit of advice," said Davis.

"And pray who was Mr. Jeremy Botham?" inquired our hero.

"Have you never heard Hamilton's story of Jeremy, a first-rate specimen of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties. Come, Hamilton—tell it us for positively the last time."

"Some other evening—it's too late now," replied Gerard, hunting for his cap; "there—there's the old ting-tang chiming for twelve, and I've got a cub at seven to-morrow."

"Pooh, pooh, man; no time like the present—if you sleep quick, you'll soon make up a quarter of an hour. Besides, consider it will be something for Spencer to laugh about in his dreams to-night, and will tend to adjourn the nightmare to another time."

"Well, I suppose wilful men must have their way, and so here goes for Jeremy Botham and his tale. 'The Hon. Francis Chetwynd was a commoner of Christ Church, and as such owed Mr. Botham a small account for divers pairs of boots, and other leg covers; the last account for which he chanced to pay one day when I was regaling myself on a prime Woodville over his fire. Soon after he passed his great go, he received a visit—during a snug breakfast-party, of which I was—from Jeremy, respectfully requesting a settlement of his little account; it was under ten pounds. As soon as Chetwynd cast his eye over the bill, he quietly replied, 'I shall not pay it, Mr. Botham.'—'Very well, sir, just as you please,' replied Jeremy with great coolness; 'then I shall be obliged to stop your degree.'—'That will be some three or four years hence, Mr. Botham,' said my friend, 'as I have gone out in laws.' Jeremy looked screwed, and threatened

the vice's court. 'I can't help that,' replied Chetwynd, 'but I distinctly refuse to pay the demand.' 'And why, sir?' asked his dun. 'Because I never pay bills twice,' was the answer. 'Twice, sir?' 'Twice, sir. A very pretty story indeed; do you suppose, sir, I would ask for a bill that—that—had been paid?' blurted out Jeremy, working himself into a heat. 'I do,' replied Chetwynd, turning his back upon the dun, and proceeding to dissect a fowl. 'If, sir, you have paid it, as you say, show me the receipt,' said Jeremy. 'I certainly shall not do anything of the kind, as you ought to know well enough whether I have paid or not—leave the room.' 'Then I shall summon you, sir,' growled Botham, as he banged the door after him with a muttered blessing.

"Ay," said Tom Davis, with a laugh, "like the pluck translation of ἐκλαυσε πικρῶς, he shut the door sharply after him."

"On the following morning," continued Hamilton "in obedience to a polite printed invitation from the vice, Chetwynd, *cum suis*, or, as paddy would roughly translate it, 'with his back,' proceeded to the reverend gentleman's court. Botham was before him, looking as pleased as a child at its first piece of mischief, now talking to one witness, then running his eye over his ledger, and calling the attention of his proctor to some good point in his case. The cause now came on; and Jeremy having put in his ledger, proved the delivery of the goods, and swore, in answer to questions from Chetwynd, that the account had not been paid, and that he *always* struck paid accounts off his books. His advocate proceeded to comment in no measured terms on the presumed defence, which of course he characterized as false, and also on the meanness of the defendant, congratulating the gentleman on the prospect of having to pay not only the debt, but also all the expenses of 'this vexatious proceeding,' as he was pleased to call it. The advocate having concluded his two guineas worth, reseated himself, and Chetwynd was called on for his defence. 'Sir,' said Chetwynd, 'I paid this bill to Mr. Botham himself on the 15th of March, in the presence of Mr. Gerard Hamilton of St. Luke's, whom I tender as my witness.' When Jeremy saw me come forward, a cloud passed over his features, and a muttered anathema seemed to play about the corners of his mouth. As soon as I had told how I happened to be breakfasting with Chetwynd when he paid the bill to Jeremy, and that I saw the latter receipt it in the room, up jumped Botham's proctor, little Jenkins, to cross-examine me. After some doubling and bush-fighting, I was forced to admit that although I believed the present bill to be the one I saw receipted, yet that I could not distinctly swear to it, though I could that it was for the same amount. Whereupon Jenkins submitted to the court that this only proved the payment of *a* bill, and not of *the* bill, and that it was not unlikely that the defendant had more than one bill with his client. To this the court assented, amid the hardly-suppressed applause of the Bothamites. However, we were not done yet. Chetwynd now produced a small bit of paper carefully folded up so as only to show one line of writing, and having placed Mr. Botham's foreman in the box, asked him, whether that was his master's handwriting. The witness readily assented. 'Then, Mr. Vice-chancellor,' said Chet-

wynd, looking fixedly at Jeremy, who evidently seemed uncomfortable, 'I beg leave to tender a receipt for the present demand, signed by Mr. Botham on the 15th of March.' Down went Jeremy's mouth, and out he ran as if old Nick himself, under the form of a stamped receipt, were at his heels."

"Now, that is what I call a refreshing story," said Davis; "it is as comforting as the receiving an accountant's letter requesting the payment of eighteen-pence for a skiff, only nine years and three quarters after date. Here, give me those tell-tales, Spencer, and I'll look them over to-morrow, and then we'll hold a cabinet council, and decide what bills shall be laid on the table. Good-night, Gerard—good-night, Middleton;" and away went Tom, singing "all round my hat" at the top of his voice on his road to his candle-box, miscalled a bedroom.

"Spencer," said Hamilton, "not a word about what has been settled to-night—keep quiet, and contract your expenses during the remainder of this term—I will make the necessary arrangements with my cousin for your succeeding to the clerkship as soon as Hutchins gives up, and then, if you can make up your mind to stand a little coldness from acquaintances, and to work your hardest, all may get on well. Good-night—come—no thanks—good-night! Remember lecture to-morrow—get to bed, and sleep your hardest."

"May I be thankful for these acts of unmerited kindness," murmured Spencer, vainly endeavouring to repress his feelings, which at last found vent in tears.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GOOD NEWS—A BEAUTIFUL INSTANCE OF NOBLE GENEROSITY IN A MAN, AND OF SENSITIVE DELICACY IN A WOMAN—MORE MATRIMONY—SPECIMEN OF A LITERARY REPUTATION—LOVE-MAKING UPON EXALTED PRINCIPLES.

IT was in less than a week after the evening-party described in the last chapter, that Mr. Fitzosborne, having made himself acquainted with the humble lodging of John Markham, climbed to its second floor, and having knocked at the door, and been told to come in, presented himself to the startled eyes of its inhabitant.

"Mr. Fitzosborne!" said the young man in a tone of great surprise.

"I am come, Mr. Markham, upon an errand that gives me great pleasure, and which will, as I flatter myself, excuse the uncereemonious style of my visit. My good uncle has done me the kindness of making himself acquainted with one or two anecdotes in your professional career, my dear sir, and has in consequence charged me with the very agreeable task of announcing to you that you may consider yourself as certain of immediate promotion to the rank, first of commander, and then to that of post-captain, with the understanding that you are to be put in command of the first vessel for which he does not stand already engaged."

Young Markham looked steadily in the face of the almost stranger who announced this astounding intelligence, and it would not be easy to describe the expression of his countenance as he did so. It was not incredulity, nor yet was it the deep joy that perfect belief would have brought with it, which might be seen to work his fine manly features in defiance of all his efforts to compose them; but there was a slight contraction of the brow that seemed to indicate a painful pressure upon the brain. He looked puzzled, bewildered, and as if uncertain where he stood, or with whom he was conversing.

Many a man, and many a good-natured one too, would have felt tempted to smile at the whimsical manner in which this glorious news appeared to affect the nerves of the stout sailor; but Mr. Fitzosborne felt differently, and, if curiously scanned, might himself have furnished a theme for the same species of pleasantry, for beyond all question he had tears in his eyes which it was necessary he should get rid of before he attempted again to address his companion. It was but a moment, however, before he stretched out a friendly hand, saying in a voice that spoke more than mere words, "My dear Markham, let me be the first to wish you joy of this, and let me be the first also to see that it in truth does bring you joy. Of course, you are aware that the uncle of whom I speak has the power of doing what he has promised for you?"

Markham grasped the hand that was extended to him, and found in the true sympathy with which he was addressed by his benefactor, the sober certainty of waking happiness which at first had seemed too mighty for his faculties to receive.

Almost ashamed of being so completely overwhelmed, he shook his head with a sort of atoning self-reproach, and said, by way of apology, "You know not what this is to me, Mr. Fitzosborne. Such news might indeed turn the head of any man in my situation, but to me it seems as if it must burst my heart."

"It may swell without bursting it, my dear fellow," replied Fitzosborne, smiling. "Nothing, however, will do you so much good, and make you feel it so pleasantly, as opening that same full heart to some friend, and making them share the emotion that has overfilled it. What say you to taking a walk with me? I am going to call at Mrs. Hartley's, and I have great reason to believe that Miss Ridley would hear our news with great pleasure."

"You are going to Mrs. Hartley's, and you invite me to accompany you?" said Markham, while a smile of unmixed happiness irradiated his handsome face. "How much or how little you know [concerning me, Mr. Fitzosborne, I will not venture to guess; but I will not for that reason refuse your invitation to accompany you to Mrs. Hartley's."

The two young men set off together, and for some time after they got upon the pavement neither of them spoke, though they walked side by side, and arm-in-arm, like friends who might have liked well to discuss any subject that had been interesting to either. But the thoughts of Markham were too delicious to permit his interrupting them himself, and Fitzosborne either guessed this, or himself felt too well inclined to indulge in meditation, to break into the reverie of his new friend. Before they reached Bruton Street, however, Markham burst out into such an unrestrained expression of his happiness, that had his noble-hearted companion been still awaiting the reward of his exertions, he would have received it then.

They found all the ladies of Mrs. Hartley's family, including Constance, assembled in the drawing-room with Sir James Ridley, in the act of being thanked and praised, with all the eloquent energy of Mrs. Hartley's silver tongue, for the exquisite taste and truly characteristic liberality of a tolerably broad and wide casket, on which the eyes of Margaretta were fixed with a glance of unusual brightness and unusual joy. Caroline was looking at the same object over her shoulder with girlish glee, and not without a tender hope for herself, under similar circumstances, in future; while, as usual, the heads of Penelope and Constance might be seen not far asunder, discoursing some theme, that, without being quite whispered, had very little the air of being intended for general conversation.

Mrs. Hartley looked up as the two gentlemen entered, and though she greeted Mr. Fitzosborne almost affectionately, and Markham almost civilly, there was a little air of mystery in her manner which might have told them, had they been less pre-occupied, that she was very particularly engaged indeed.

Margaretta performed a look of embarrassment skilfully enough;

and, with a glance of intelligence at her lover, threw a handkerchief which she held in her hand upon the still open casket, so as to cover about a fourth part of its brilliant lining. Caroline tittered, and Sir James laughed outright, being caught in a fact by no means intended to be a secret, though having all the piquancy of one.

Both Fitzosborne and Markham looked at this group, neither of them very fully conscious of whom it was composed, and assuredly with no more idea of what they were all about than if they had been positively blind. It was for other faces that they were seeking. Those were not the eyes that their own were hoping to greet. But a glance towards the other side of the room showed them exactly all they wanted to see, and with a decision of purpose that had a good deal of oblivious indiscretion in it, they walked directly up to the two young ladies with the slightest possible salutation to those they passed.

The eyes of both glanced brightly up to them, and the cheeks of both kindled into a blush as the gentlemen approached; nor were their thoughts less sympathetic than their looks. Both were pleased, oh! very greatly pleased at seeing them enter thus familiarly together, and the hopes of both darted forward to some distant future, faintly resembling the reality of what had already happened.

Greetings were exchanged, and hands were shaken, and then the two visitors drew two chairs, and placed them opposite to the two young ladies, with very blamable indifference as to the relative position of their persons with respect to the rest of the party.

"Penelope!" murmured Markham on one side. "Miss Ridley!" gently pronounced Mr. Fitzosborne on the other. What followed from the first we will not say; but after the pause of an instant, during which the last-named gentleman indulged himself by one happy look at the sweet face smilingly turned towards him, he added, "I have been happy enough to convince my good uncle that at least one great oversight has been committed in the department where he has influence. Your old friend here will be gazetted as master and commander to-night, and will be a post-captain with exactly as little delay as possible."

Constance clasped her hands together in very speaking ecstasy, and looking at him with a smile of grateful approval, and of earnest gratitude, which he found it rather difficult to bear with the resolute composure of manner which formed the armour within which he lived, she exclaimed, "Mr. Fitzosborne! how can I thank you?"

This was exactly the most difficult question she could have asked him, precisely because it was so exceedingly easy to answer. Mr. Fitzosborne, however, was not going to lose the reward of all the forbearance he had been practising so steadily, for the sake of indulging the weakness of a moment; he therefore replied with the greatest propriety, that it was he who had to thank her for the great pleasure she had been the means of procuring him; "and not pleasure only, Miss Ridley," he added, with feeling, "I have to thank you for something greatly more precious still. You have been the means of giving me a friend whose character I honour, and whose manners are delightful to me."

While this was passing at one end of the room, Sir James Ridley was enjoying, at the other, the effect which he fancied he was producing.

"How completely a man of the world that Fitzosborne is!" he muttered in the ear of his love. "He knows as well what I am about here now as I do myself; and upon my life and soul I never saw a fellow turn a thing off so well since I was born. I never did, upon my soul; and d'ye see how he has contrived to lead off Markham? Isn't it capital?"

"Do be quiet, Sir James!" replied Margaretta, with the look that very good-natured and well-intentioned young ladies always give to exceedingly stupid men when it is their kind purpose to make such believe that they think them particularly lively and clever. "Do be quiet! can't you? Upon my honour, I shall die if you say anything that shall make them look round."

"Oh! I can't help that, you know, my love—I can't, upon my life and soul. How d'ye do, Mr. Fitzosborne? I shall come and have another look at your beautiful house, I promise you. No one knows what may happen to him next, you see, so it is possible it may be useful. Come over here, Markham. What the devil do you turn your back that way for? You need not be terrified, my fine fellow. I won't blow your brains out if you do just happen to look round."

Mr. Fitzosborne replied to the first part of this speech by immediately approaching the speaker, as much probably for the purpose of concealing the still oblivious condition of his friend, as to apologize for his own. But ere he could speak, the elated spirits of Mrs. Hartley led her to address him in a manner that at once removed all his embarrassment. "My dear Mr. Fitzosborne," she said, "you are too old a friend to be treated with ceremony or reserve of any kind, particularly on a point whereon your kindness will, I am sure, lead you to take much friendly interest. I doubt not, however, but that you have already heard the news which is at once so dear and so dreadful to the heart of a mother, namely, that my beloved, my unequalled Margaretta, is about to be taken from me. But it is by one whom, beyond all others on the earth, I would, had the choice been given, have elected for her husband. Yet, oh! the strange mosaic of the feelings which this brings with it, at once so very sweet, and so very bitter. Do I make myself understood?"

Mr. Fitzosborne smiled, and bowed, and looked agreeably intelligent; whereupon Mrs. Hartley beckoned him towards her with an affectionate look, saying, "Well, then, come here, and pass judgment on the taste, the elegant taste, and noble liberality of my dear future son. Silly child!" she added, gently patting the hand of Margaretta, which was stretched out as if to hide the sacred gift of love from every eye—"silly child! take away that foolish little hand. My dear Sir James, use the authority which so soon will be legally yours, and tell her that her shyness will not long avail to conceal the fact that the chosen of her heart is the most noble, generous, elegant creature that lives. Is she not a little fool, my dear Sir James?"

"Why, I can't say that it strikes me as very wise, Margaret, to fancy that diamonds after they are bought are not to be looked at. I

don't approve that, upon my life and soul. Come, come, take off your hand, there's a good girl. I can't say that I think there is anything to be ashamed of in the diamonds."

Thus admonished, Margaretta withdrew her hand from the jewels, and placing it before her eyes, exclaimed, "O, Sir James! They are too beautiful—a great deal too beautiful for me—and that is the reason why I am ashamed to look at them myself, or to let anybody else look at them."

"But, in my opinion, Miss Margaret, nothing that can be had for money can possibly be too handsome for my wife, and that, as I take it, is the proper view of the case. Come over here, Markham! I don't think it's over and above likely that you ever happened to catch sight of such a fitting up as this. I have heard of pearls coming out of the sea, but I don't believe that anybody ever said diamonds did. Besides, for my part, I hate secrets and mysteries when there's no occasion for them. I can fancy well enough that a girl who was going to be married to a man who had only a few hundreds a year perhaps, *might* be ashamed of it. I can fancy *that* easy enough—I can, upon my life and soul!" And as he spoke, the elegant baronet looked with no very equivocal expression in the face of his sister. "But as to you, Margaretta, it is altogether different. What in the world can you have got to say to Miss Penelope, I wonder, that should prevent your coming here, Markham, when I call you?"

Miss Hartley heard these words, though it was very evident that Markham did not; but as she got up and moved towards the table to which Sir James was inviting them, he got up and did the same, and by the help of a timely word from Constance, and another from Fitzosborne, he was sufficiently brought back to the present moment, and the present scene, to prevent any farther observations. It was Penelope only who saw how completely he was an altered man; it was she only who caught the reflection of the happiness that sparkled in his eye, or was conscious of the joyous tone in which every word he uttered was spoken. Everybody else was too busy about Margaretta and her new acquisition, for both Constance and Fitzosborne seemed to think it a duty to cover the unacknowledged happiness of the secret lovers, by manifesting a great deal of voluble interest for the differently constituted joys of the affianced pair.

The diamonds were still glittering in the hands of Mr. Fitzosborne when Mr. Marsh joined the party. His entrance was greeted by an exclamation of very cordial satisfaction from Sir James, who, to do the constancy of his friendship justice, was never quite contented, let him have as many admirers round him as he might, unless Marsh were present too, filling up whatever chinks others might leave in the cotton case of adulation in which he delighted to live, by the bold and unshrinking application of his wholesale flattery. On this occasion, however, Mr. Marsh did not affect much more interest in the scene than he really felt. There is a sort of long-sighted proverb which says that it is a good thing to be cousin to an estate. Mr. Marsh was rather peculiarly alive to the truth of this, and felt, to his very fingers' ends, that kinship to diamonds was not to be despised

by a wise man. Something like the burden of an old song came back upon his mind—

“’Tis a very fine thing to be father-in-law
To a very magnificent”

In short, his fate was urging him powerfully forward, and the species of restraint with which his habitual prudence constantly surrounded him, making him gaze upon every step in his pursuit of fortune for a prodigiously long time before he took it, was now rapidly melting away before the influence of temptation. He had passed nearly the whole of the time that Mrs. Hartley’s grand party lasted, in mentally making a catalogue of all and everything that indicated either her wealth, or her holding a good position in society. Had the list been written, a portion of it might have run thus :

No end of silver spoons, about one-third of them being gilt.

A hundred and twenty-eight wax candles, counting those in the refreshment-room downstairs ; besides seven lamps, and the gas over the street door.

At the very least a dozen lady somebodies, besides one countess, and two lords, certain, without counting the probabilities of more.

Refreshments a good deal past calculating.

Mrs. Hartley’s diamonds.

Lord Balourney called the youngest girl plain “Caroline.”

* * * * *

The whole concluding with the pithy reflection, “I don’t think I am at all likely to do better, if I were to wait these fifty years.”

Such had been the result of Mrs. Hartley’s party ; and though the week that had passed since had never happened to offer a moment in which opportunity and courage did sufficiently cohere to produce the offer of himself which he meditated, his purpose was in no degree weakened, and at the very moment at which we are arrived he told himself that he wished to God he could just be five minutes alone with Mrs. Hartley, and he would bring matters to a conclusion at once.

As this bold wish was conceived at a moment when no less than seven persons, most of them in-dwellers with her, surrounded the lady, Mr. Marsh could hardly fail to think that some providential influence was working in his favour when he saw them all melt away as it were, and vanish from before his eyes. Mr. Fitzosborne took his leave almost as soon as he entered. Penelope having whispered in her lover’s ear, “Write to the dear cabin by this day’s post,” he too departed. Margaretta and Caroline were already dressed for riding in the park, whither Sir James was to accompany them, and ere many minutes the horses came to the door, and the trio set off. The bride elect having cautiously locked the precious casket, consigned it to the care of her eldest sister, requesting that she would deposit it in safety till her return ; and in order to comply with this request, Penelope conveyed the gems upstairs, whither she was accompanied by Constance, so that in about ten minutes after his decisive resolution was formed, Mr. Marsh rather unexpectedly found himself at liberty to put it into execution.

If anything like a qualm, or a doubt, came over him, it did not last ; for after remaining rather unusually silent for about two minutes, he quitted the place where he was sitting, and walked round the table to the sofa on which Mrs. Hartley and her Berlin work-basket reposed.

Younger and less experienced ladies than Mrs. Hartley would have found little difficulty in interpreting a movement which, under the circumstances, was so very decisive. She was perfectly certain that Mr. Marsh was now going to do what she had been for some time past expecting, and she too was also perfectly determined to bring the matter to a conclusion with as little delay as possible, as not all her excellent management, nor all her little contrivances for laying the purse of Constance under contribution, had enabled her to pay ready money for all the fine things that had been found absolutely necessary in the present delightful state of affairs, or even for all the good dinners which Sir James had eaten during the period of his *enamouration*. Such being the case, it was exceedingly desirable that her own marriage should, if possible, be brought to a conclusion before the payment of her London bills became absolutely necessary, and she was already conning the words in which she should clothe the frank and candid avowal of the sentiments which, in justice to herself, she was compelled to confess that Mr. Marsh had inspired, when the drawing-room door was thrown open, and Lady Stephens announced. If Mrs. Hartley could have annihilated the little lady by putting her foot upon her, and so extinguishing her for ever, it is highly probable that she might have been tempted to do it. But unfortunately this was impossible ; so she smiled, stretched out her hand to welcome her, and screwed her courage to endure what all the art of woman could not now enable her to prevent. Mr. Marsh walked to the window, and then seated himself on a distant sofa with a book, in the hope that so evident an indication of having business with the lady of the house, which waited till the present interruption was over, would produce the desired effect of clearing the field for his great enterprise.

Lady Stephens meanwhile, having sufficiently squeezed Mrs. Hartley's hand, seated herself, and looked round the room. It might be, perhaps, that she did perceive Mr. Marsh, and that she did perceive also that he wished her elsewhere ; but this, as she might very justly have reasoned with herself, was no reason that elsewhere she should be ; so, if she knew of his presence, she followed the advice of M. Jourdain, and did "*comme si elle ne le savait pas* ;" that is to say, she began talking of all things in heaven and earth with a velocity and spirit that had every appearance of being calculated to endure for ever.

Mrs. Hartley behaved incomparably well ; could anything have freed her from the nuisance without compromising *les bienséances*, she would not have endured it for an instant ; but, as it was, a martyr might have taken a lesson from her.

The visitings of Lady Stephens to all the houses wherein she could gain admittance were not so idle, as some short-sighted persons might suppose—she generally had an object of some sort or other, and on

the present occasion was rather earnestly bent upon repeating with success a professional manœuvre, from which she was persuaded that she had on many occasions derived considerable advantage. Lady Stephens was an authoress, and had contrived, by a vast variety of little auxiliary operations, to be in some degree known as such.

It frequently happens, as we all know, that some wish or some whim, not always very clearly understood by the "thinking public," induces writers to put forth their labours unaccompanied by their name. Whenever this happens with a work of sufficient merit to attract attention, it has at least the good effect of exciting curiosity, and of giving opportunity for critical acumen to display itself in the shrewdness of the guesses made respecting the pen thus seeking to preserve an incognito. But Lady Stephens knew better than thus idly to waste her time upon conjectures that could lead to no profit of any kind; she therefore employed herself differently; and no successful work in the belles lettres line ever appeared anonymously without her contriving to get it said *ça et là* that *she* was supposed to be the author of it.

It may be thought, perhaps, that this was quite as idle an exercise of ingenuity as the other, inasmuch as it was impossible such delusion could spread far enough, or last long enough, to be of any essential service to the lady's literary reputation; but this is one of the many blunders into which people fall who reason from probabilities instead of facts. Lady Stephen did often find very solid advantage from even the limited and short-lived circulation of such fallacies, and the consequence of this was, that she persevered in the system despite a good deal of quizzing, right and left, which did not always escape her observation.

She now came, fully determined to take her chance for this, in the hope of having it said by some of the Hartley family that they had reason to believe Lady Stephens knew a good deal more about that capital satire, "Phillis Fickle," than most people were aware of. She was, however, somewhat disappointed at not finding, as she expected, a party of young ladies in the drawing-room. Young ladies are excellent agents in such a business as this, being, for the most part, apt repeaters of what they hear, without too profoundly reasoning upon it. She was consoled, however, by the sight of Mr. Marsh, who, she doubted not, would listen with sufficient attention to all she said, notwithstanding his apparently attentive perusal of the volume he held in his hand.

"What a very foolish fuss people are making about this Phillis Fickle, my dear Mrs. Hartley!" she began. "I am sure, if I had had the slightest idea that it would have created such a sensation,—nothing, no, nothing in the world should have ever induced me— But, for heaven's sake, never say, my dear Mrs. Hartley!—I beg you ten thousand pardons! I am quite aware that our acquaintance has not been long enough to justify my troubling you with any of my little anxieties and alarms. But if you *should* hear me named as the author of this—O dear!—what shall I call it?—of this very foolish book—for foolish it was, I am sure, to write it—if you should hear me named as the author, my dear Mrs. Hartley, I beg and entreat that

you will say that you know nothing in the world about it. Will you have the great kindness to promise me this?"

Mrs. Hartley, notwithstanding the shortness of acquaintance above alluded to, knew her visitor sufficiently well to be quite aware what she was about, and very cleverly turning this knowledge to account, replied, "To tell you the truth, my dear Lady Stephens, the idea you allude to had never suggested itself to any of us; indeed, we had heard, and, in fact, believed, something very different. But let me strongly advise you to lose no time in saying to others what you have now said to me. I feel the importance of this so strongly, that I would not detain you another moment. Go, my dear Lady Stephens, I conjure you; insist upon being let in everywhere. You have no idea how completely everybody is at fault about this excessively clever *jeu d'esprit*, and of course, if any troublesome suspicions are abroad, a word from you will set it all right."

As Mrs. Hartley rose as she spoke, "to speed the parting guest," Lady Stephens of necessity rose too, and was bowed and nodded out of the room without further delay, leaving the mistress of the mansion once more in undisturbed possession of her drawing-room and of Mr. Marsh.

As the departing lady had not perfectly closed the drawing-room door as she passed through it, Mr. Marsh laid aside his book, left his sofa, and did it for her, and then, sedately resuming his position beside Mrs. Hartley, he said,

"It is really a great pity that, when people of fashion open their doors for the reception of company, they cannot exclude, by a summary process, every one who is not distinguished by some advantage, either natural or accidental, which may render them useful or ornamental."

This was not precisely the speech which the lady expected to hear, but she was too reasonable a woman to quarrel about trifles, and therefore answered, with a friendly confidential sort of smile—"It is indeed!"

"And yet," he resumed, "I suppose it would be altogether impossible, even with your large acquaintance, Mrs. Hartley, to act strictly upon such a principle, without running the risk of seeing one's drawing-room rather thinner than one should approve. Don't you think so?"

"I am very much afraid you are right, Mr. Marsh," she replied, and she looked full at him to find out what he was about, which look he returned steadily for a moment, and then smiled at her very kindly, after which he said,

"I often think, Mrs. Hartley, that there is a very considerable degree of resemblance between your ideas and mine on most subjects. For instance, now, I am quite sure that we could neither of us bear to waste our very handsome incomes in frittering money away in a sort of half-and-half style of expense, without even obtaining a pre-eminent place in society as people of consequence."

Though there was no absolute and downright love-making in this speech, there was so much of true sympathy as extremely well to

supply the want of it, and Mrs. Hartley answered, with unaffected earnestness,

"We do indeed think alike, Mr. Marsh! I do not know that I ever met with any one whose ideas were in more perfect conformity to my own on all these sort of things, which, in point of fact, you know, are infinitely more important to human happiness and the well-being of society, than all the fine philosophical theories that ever were invented;—there is something exceedingly pleasant in hearing one's own ideas so well put!"

"That is precisely my own feeling in listening to you," he replied; and then added, after a short pause, "Does this striking coincidence, my dear Mrs. Hartley, never suggest to you the idea of an arrangement which might greatly contribute to our mutual advantage and happiness?"

"I do not, I think, clearly understand you. As how, Mr. Marsh?" said she, in an accent which had no mixture of reproof.

"I will explain myself," he returned, approaching her by an inch or two. "My first object, I do assure you, is that we should understand each other perfectly. Of course I am aware, Mrs. Hartley, that you have a handsome jointure; and of course you are aware that I am a man of large fortune."

"As to my jointure, Mr. Marsh," returned the lady, in very gentle accents, "it is such a one as few men make their wives the compliment of offering. I have the entire and uncontrolled possession of all Mr. Hartley could leave to his family during my life. My girls are wholly dependent till after my death, Mr. Marsh, and even then I have the power of disposing of a considerable sum among them, according to my own judgment—twelve thousand pounds each being all that they will have under the settlement, independent of my will."

Mr. Marsh listened to every word she said with the most earnest attention, and for an instant recollected the youth and prettiness of Caroline, and murmured inwardly, "Twelve thousand pounds eventually;" but a second thought sufficed to make him heartily ashamed of the first. What was a paltry little fortune in expectation, compared to a good income in possession? It was not to be named in the same day! In return, therefore, for the information he had just received, he replied,

"And I, dear Mrs. Hartley, am, as you probably know already, in possession of a large fortune, perfectly unencumbered. Were our two incomes united, I feel convinced that, with your knowledge of the world and mine together, we should be enabled to live in a style gratifying to the honourable ambition of both. I need not, I am sure, tell you, that, in addition to this motive, which is, or ought to be, of the first and highest consideration to all persons deserving the name of rational beings—I need hardly tell you that, in addition to this, your charms and your talents have inspired me with a passion which it will be the first object of my life to prove as lasting as it is sincere. In a word, I ask your hand in marriage, with the sincerest desire to constitute the happiness of your life, and the deepest persuasion that you are formed in every way to constitute the happiness of mine."

Mr. Marsh concluded this speech with a look of confidence and hope that spoke more forcibly than any words could do the sincerity of his feelings, while his heart again whispered to him, in the holy sanctuary of his secret breast, "I really don't think I could do better."

There was a delicate propriety in the manner in which Mrs. Hartley received this proposal which could not fail of riveting the chains of her adorer.

Mr. Marsh," she said, "there is a noble frankness in the manner in which you have spoken to me of your sentiments and your wishes, which increases my esteem while it justifies my partiality. I will not deny—for why should I?—that your character and your manners have greatly pleased me, and that I have listened to your declaration of partial regard with the pleasure which every right-minded woman must be supposed to feel at hearing that the partiality of which she is herself conscious has been met by a responsive feeling in the person who has inspired it. I owe it to myself also to declare, that as my hand is equally free with my heart, I hold myself more than justified in declaring also, that I am willing to bestow it upon you. I consider this unequivocal acceptance of your proposal as due both to you, and to the noble state of independence in which my excellent husband so generously left me. Do I make myself understood?"

Mr. Marsh, with a temperate but well-timed demonstration of tenderness, assured her that he did understand her perfectly; and the interview ended by a mutual agreement, that everything necessary to the consummation of the happy union they contemplated should be put in action without any formal announcement of their engagement to their friends, both of them being decidedly of opinion that they did not require the advice or assistance of any one in order to enable them to bring it to a perfectly satisfactory conclusion, and that it would therefore be far wiser to say nothing about it till, all preparations being made, they should be ready to call upon their children and friends to witness their union, and congratulate them upon it.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HUMBLE HAPPINESS AND EXALTED CONTEMPT—AN OVER LATE REPENTANCE OF AN OVER EARLY LOVE.

Nothing ever went off, or came off, so quietly as this, our last recorded matrimonial engagement. Not a word of it was breathed by Mrs. Hartley to her favourite daughter, nor even to her favourite maid; and Mr. Marsh would have considered himself disgraced for ever as a man of honour and a gentleman, if he had betrayed what it was the lady's pleasure to keep concealed. So, as far as they were concerned, everything went on just as if nothing particular had happened. But there were other individuals of the party whose adventures we are recounting, who were less reserved. Well might Mrs. Hartley say that the present season promised to be an important one

to them all, for scarcely a week passed without some event occurring which had for its object that most important of all human transactions, matrimony.

Within three days of John Markham's name being in the gazette as master and commander, it was determined among the little committee that sat upon the question, consisting of Constance Ridley, Penelope Hartley, and her lover, that the young man should immediately make his proposals in form to the mother of his beloved, taking care to inform her at the same time of the assurance he had received of further and rapid promotion. The brave sailor felt the business to be of a nature infinitely more calculated to shake the nerves than any his profession had ever exposed him to, and he would have thought it more so still, had he not obtained a promise from Penelope, before he set about it, that she would marry him, even though her mother, by refusing her consent, should deprive her of the portion conditionally bequeathed to her by her father.

The young man, like a skilful commander as he was, began by placing in line-of-battle style before his intended mother-in-law all the most brilliant features in his greatly-altered situation. He spoke temperately, but confidently, of the contingent as well as of the positive advantages opening before him, and concluded by briefly and frankly confessing the attachment existing between himself and her eldest daughter, together with their mutual hopes that, in consideration of the length of time this attachment had lasted, she would give her consent to their immediate union.

"Length of time!" were the first words Mrs. Hartley uttered in reply. "Is it possible, then, John Markham, that you were the cause of her refusing Tuffton Bossett?"

"I have every reason to hope and believe it," was his reply.

"Audacious!" she muttered, but so low as not to require an answer. "Madness! absolute madness!" she added aloud.

"At least you must allow, Mrs. Hartley, that the madness was not without method in it," replied Markham. "You never saw any symptoms of the insanity, my dear Mrs. Hartley, until circumstances enabled it to wear the appearance of reason—and this, I trust, will give you confidence in the steady prudence of our future career."

"Prudence! Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Mrs. Hartley, knitting her brows very ominously. The lover trembled, and saw mountains of most difficult ascent rising before him; but ere he had decided in what tone to answer her, her manner suddenly changed; she waved her hand as a signal that she wished to hear no more, and then said, but without any further asperity of tone, "Mr. Markham, you must give me time to think of this. You can scarcely wonder that your proposal has astonished me, or that I should feel it to be necessary that I should reflect before I give you my final answer. Let me see you to-morrow, sir—for the present I will request you to leave me."

Poor Markham instantly took his leave, and with a heart but little lightened by the reflection that the dreaded interview was over. He entered the dining parlour, indeed, where Penelope waited to learn

the result of it, with a heavier step than that with which he had left it, and with an aching heart recounted what had passed; but no sooner had Penelope heard him to the end of his narrative than she exclaimed,

"Look not so miserable, Markham—all will go well. I know my mother better than you do, and will venture to predict that this self-consultation will end in her being very thankful to get so very old-maidish a daughter married at all—though it is very possible, observe, that she will announce her consent with a good deal of the solemnity of woe, and so as to make you aware that it is a tremendous sacrifice."

But Penelope was mistaken in supposing that the consultation to which her mother had retired was to be with herself alone. An expected visit from Mr. Marsh was received in the back drawing-room with closed doors, and there she informed him of the proposal she had received for her eldest daughter, without, however, making any hostile observations upon it, but, on the contrary, concluding her statement by observing, that Mr. Markham had certainly great interest in his profession, and that if Penelope liked him, she was not a girl likely to give him up, or to be persuaded into marrying any one else, let him be who he would—of which she hinted that she had already had good proof.

"I agree with you perfectly," replied Mr. Marsh, "your eldest daughter is a sort of person that, you may depend upon it, will always have her own way."

"You really think so? And, alas! I am afraid you are only too right! Will it not be better, then, my dear Mr. Marsh, to consent at once to this marriage, rather than make ourselves all miserably uncomfortable by refusing it?"

"Most certainly," he replied; "and since you have the kindness to ask my opinion, I will candidly confess to you, that I should be exceedingly sorry to see you oppose it. Depend upon it, my dear Mrs. Hartley, *our* happiness would be completely destroyed by your retaining your daughter single against her will—and, indeed, under any circumstances, I should consider the marriage of Miss Penelope as the most fortunate event that could have happened for us."

And thus was the happiness of Penelope secured by an influence which few would have supposed likely to produce it.

As soon as this private interview was over, Mrs. Hartley summoned her eldest daughter to her presence, and, addressing her with all the dignity of a Roman matron, declared it to be her intention not to oppose the choice she had made, widely different as it was in every respect from what she would have wished for. There were many reasons, however, which made it necessary for this exemplary mother to testify her disapproval somewhat more strongly, even while entering into details that confirmed the certainty of her consent, and she therefore added the following annotation:

"But, of course, Penelope, though I refuse not my consent, you cannot expect my approval. You cannot expect, for instance, that upon occasion of such a marriage as this, I should strain every nerve to make the same advance for wedding-clothes as I have promised in

the case of Margaretta. In the first place, such preparations would be utterly incongruous in the situation to which you are about to sink yourself; and, in the second, I conceive it would be setting an extremely dangerous example before the eyes of Caroline. I wish her to know that I feel the difference, and act accordingly. Had you married Tuffton Bossett, Penelope, you would have found me as liberal as your sister Margaretta has done; as it is, I shall consider the sum of one hundred pounds as amply sufficient for the purchase of everything which it will be necessary for you to have."

The agitation of Penelope was so strong when her mother addressed her thus abruptly upon a subject which had been for so many years the hoarded secret of her heart, that, placing her elbow upon the table beside which she sat, she covered her face with her hand, and this position she had retained during the whole harangue which followed; but as Mrs. Hartley presently added, "Will this sum content you, Penelope?" the young lady was obliged to change it, and when she did so, for the purpose of saying, "Perfectly, mamma!" she displayed a face copiously bedewed with tears.

"I am sorry, Penelope," said her mother, in an accent of considerable severity—"I am sorry to perceive, that even while your lips declare you to be satisfied, your eyes shed tears of mortification at a sentence which I have thought it my duty to pronounce. When young ladies have sufficient courage to form such unsuitable attachments, they should take care to have enough also to endure the inevitable consequences of them."

"O do not so greatly mistake me, dear mother!" cried Penelope, smiling most radiantly in the midst of her tears, "I am not weeping because I shall not be able to have as many fine dresses as Margaret!"

"Then may I inquire why you *are* weeping, Penelope? Is it that you already repent your rashness?"

"O, no, no, no, mamma! My tears were merely the result of weakness, from feeling more happiness than I am able to support with fortitude. O mother! This is the first perfectly happy hour I have known for the last ten years!"

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Mrs. Hartley was much too sensible a woman to attempt reasoning with such folly as this, and contented herself with quietly ringing the bell for her daughter Margaret, without condescending to make any answer at all.

"We must not waste our time, my dear child," said she as her better-beloved and more prudent daughter entered the room. "You have an immense deal to do, Margaret. To-day I think that we must begin about the pocket-handkerchiefs and the neck-shirts. If you have not set yourself to count, dearest, you will be thrown out by the monstrous sum that tolerably elegant collars come to. And that is precisely the reason why you ought to see about them before you settle about the quantity of linen. If you will take my advice, love, you will not overdo that latter article. Who but your *lingere*, and your maid, will know how much or how little you set off with? Whereas, a variety of elegant collars is really of great importance."

"Dear me, mamma! do you suppose I don't know that? Je ne

suis pas si bête que j'ai l'air. However, I am perfectly ready to set about the collars to-day—though Ridley said something about going to see a pattern carriage somewhere or other. But if he comes before I return, he must wait. What are you meditating upon, Penelope? You look as if your thoughts were wandering to another world, and that collars had no more interest in your eyes than straws."

"O yes, they have, Margaret!" replied Penelope with a bright smile.

"It would be better they should not," said Mrs. Hartley with great solemnity. "You have yet to learn, Margaretta, I presume, how your sister Penelope is going to dispose of herself? It is no very pleasing task to announce it, I confess, but it must be done, and therefore I may as well tell you at once, that not thinking Tuffton Bossett good enough, she is going to marry herself to Mr. John Markham."

"Penelope going to marry John Markham? impossible, mamma! I cannot believe it," exclaimed Margaretta.

"Then perhaps she will contradict the report, my dear; I will forgive the breach of politeness if she does," said Mrs. Hartley.

"What *does* mamma mean, Penelope?" demanded the younger sister with some appearance of impatience.

"Exactly what she says, Margaret," replied the elder smiling. "With you about to be married on one side of me, and Constance on the other, how was it possible that I could bear the mortification of sitting down as an old maid in the midst of you?"

"But Markham! I don't believe he has a shilling in the whole world beyond his pay; though he may perhaps be able to settle the reversion of the cabin upon you. I am quite certain you are jesting, Penelope. Nothing in the world could persuade me that you really mean to marry John Markham."

"It does not greatly matter Margaret. Don't let me interrupt your business, for I know that you have really and truly a great deal to do, and besides I have myself got to write a letter to my future jointure-house. So good-bye for the present." And so saying she left the room with a light step and happy heart, leaving her mother and sister to discuss in perfect freedom the inconceivable absurdity of her choice.

From this period, the ladies in Bruton Street were, one and all, with the exception of the youthful Caroline, so completely occupied by their own particular affairs, as to care very little, comparatively speaking, about the ordinary concerns of the world around them. They continued, indeed, to receive and accept invitations, and to appear punctually in Sir James Ridley's splendid box at the opera, greatly to the satisfaction of their anxious friends, who wearied not of watching the love-making universally known to be going on within it. Mrs. Hartley herself, indeed, contributed nothing to this public fund of gossip; no single individual whatever, either in her family or out of it, having the slightest idea of the *attachment* existing between herself and Mr. Marsh.

But although everything was apparently going on with the greatest smoothness towards the happy conclusion of these various engagements, there was one pair, and the one which created by far the greatest degree of general attention, between whom feelings were

arising, still totally unsuspected by the majority of the lookers-on, yet threatening to destroy the delicate filagree work of poetical passion which all the world had gazed upon with so much interest. Poor Constance was becoming day by day more and more miserable ; for day by day, she was discovering traits of character in the man to whom she had bound herself, at variance with all that was most predominant in her own. A glittering yet lamentably thick veil seemed to have fallen from the image her fancy had set up, and instead of the being of super-human sublimity which her imagination had conceived, she saw Henry Mortimer as he really was, artificial, vain, little-minded, and insincere.

No doubt she had been greatly to blame in rendering her heart to a fascination which her judgment was never called upon to test ; but, poor girl ! her punishment for it was a most heavy one ! It was impossible that any woman could think more justly on the tremendous subject of marriage than she did. She felt that, without the firmest esteem and the most undoubting confidence on both sides, it was impossible for either party to hope for happiness, or even to flatter themselves that they should be capable of doing their duty in the state. Unhappy Constance ! Henry Mortimer no longer possessed her esteem, no longer possessed her confidence. Yet had he done no act to forfeit either, that could be quoted in justification of her declaring that she had changed her opinion of him, and desired to break their engagement. By an unhappy fatality it seemed that the clearness of perception with which she now discerned all the defects of his character, was in exact proportion to the blindness with which she had before overlooked them ; and the miserable uncertainty which beset her as to what she ought to do in the dreadful position in which she had placed herself, rendered her most completely wretched. Yet had she no courage to seek either sympathy or advice from her now happy friend. She remembered, alas ! for her torment ! most well, and most clearly, the surprise Penelope had evidently felt at the suddenness of her attachment, and now, to call her off from almost the first happy hours she had ever known, for the purpose of telling her that her love was cured, very nearly as suddenly as it had been conceived, required more courage than she seemed to have left within her. Her very soul shrank from the avowal, and she determined to let events take their course without calling out for help to her happier friend, who, after all, could in truth have no power to give it.

Yet, with no counsellor but herself, Constance would have very soon come to the conclusion, that by persevering in an engagement which her heart no longer sanctioned, she might be committing a worse fault than any which could be attributed to her, if she honestly confessed her altered sentiments ; very soon would she have discovered this most unquestionable truth, and have acted upon it, had it not been for two reasons, so " strong both against the deed," in her opinion, as to render her absolutely incapable of performing it. The first of these was the fact, now more fully and clearly ascertained than it had been at first, that the fortune of Mr. Mortimer was so small as to make the loss of hers a disappointment of the most serious nature, and one which the generosity of her temper shrank from inflicting, more sen-

sitively than from telling him that he was no longer beloved. The second reason was one which reached her rather in the shape of a feeling than a thought. She was conscious of it, dreadfully conscious of it, but think of it she dared not. In her deep *deep* grief, almost to her horror, she was conscious, that though incapable, as she hoped and trusted, of ever again loving mortal man, she had discovered in Mr. Fitzosborne so many of the higher qualities which were wanting in her affianced husband, that were she now to break the tie she had formed, her own heart might be the first to reproach her with lightly yielding it up to another love; and that too without a shadow of reason to justify her hoping to be loved in return.

"I hate, and I despise myself sufficiently already," thought Constance; "I will not commit this crowning act of baseness. God give me power to bear the misery I have brought upon myself in such a manner as to make atonement for it." And in this hope alone she found strength to conceal from every eye that she was in fact most profoundly miserable.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SECOND THOUGHTS—"IT IS BEST TO BE OFF WITH AN OLD LOVE, BEFORE YOU ARE ON WITH A NEW"—A HAPPY TEMPER.

The love-making of Sir James and Margareta did not, like that of some less sensible people, seek to withdraw from observation. There was no occasion whatever for any of the little amiable attentions which are seen to smooth the course of true love in the families where the soft impeachment exists without opposition from any quarter. Nobody thought it necessary to have letters to write in some particular part of the mansion where the lovers were not; neither did any one discover, upon finding themselves *en tiers* with them, that they had left gloves, pocket-handkerchief, or smelling bottle, elsewhere. Everything went on in the most quiet and orderly manner possible; and of the four pair of affianced lovers attending the court of love holden in Bruton Street, Penelope and Markham only ever chanced to find themselves accidentally near the dining-room door, just at the moment that they had something very particular to say about matters of serious importance respecting their past, present, and future affairs. Mrs. Hartley and Mr. Marsh, indeed, with their characteristic good sense, continued to restrain their tender passion within such discreet limits, that no single member of the family had the slightest suspicion of its existence; and though Sir James somewhat more than suspected that his devilish clever sharp-witted friend, Marsh, would make up his mind at last to take the charming Mrs. Hartley for better and worse, he was far from suspecting that the business was already settled.

As for the poetical attachment of Mortimer and Constance, it had in it, on both sides, too much of the eccentric nature of genius to go on at all in the common way. Yet still it did go on; or at any rate the engagement to which it had led, continued to unite them in chains apparently indissoluble. Had Mortimer been a rich man, instead of a poor one, it is highly probable that Constance would

have taken courage to confess that she had made a blunder, and that she did not any longer believe herself capable of making a suitable wife to the poet; and, judging by his "foregone conclusions," it is highly probable also, that Henry Mortimer might have discovered that the nose of Constance was either too long or too short, that her voice was too low, or too loud, or (as had happened to him at least a dozen times before) that her soul was not in all respects sufficiently congenial to his own, for a life-long union to be desirable; and he, too, might have found courage to hint as much, either to the young lady or the young lady's friends, had not his raving fancy been still kept in some sort enchained, by perceiving what he had fancied to be symptoms of increasing admiration in the manner of Mr. Fitzosborne towards his sometime idol. The idea that if he released her, Fitzosborne might propose and be accepted, was intolerable to him. He well knew how the town would talk, and how surely it would be said that he had been jilted for a better match. No! rather than bear this, he would consummate the sacrifice of himself by the awful, the conclusive, the absorbing bestowing of himself at the altar. A cold shivering seized him as he decided thus, and he would most likely have fallen into one of those paroxysms of poetic frenzy to which he was subject under the influence of all vehement emotions, had he not remembered that the business might be delayed, pretty nearly *sine die*, without restoring the lovely Constance to liberty; and on this thought he reposed himself, while he still sufficiently retained the acknowledged privileges of a lover to keep all others at a distance.

The only circumstance which gave pleasure to the self-condemned and repentant Constance, while matters continued in this state, was the marked and very flattering kindness of the whimsical but fascinating Mrs. Morley.

Lady Dort had, indeed, taken her up quite as warmly; but it was impossible for Constance, with all her genuine country-bred modesty, not to perceive that, for some reason or other, this illustrious lady thought it worth while to make a show of her. Mrs. Gardener Stewart, too, with less of fuss, and in a manner infinitely more gratifying, had made it evident that she wished to distinguish her from all the other young ladies in existence, by selecting her as a pet and a protégée. But here the charm was broken, almost before it was felt, by the evident share which Mr. Mortimer had in the business. During the time that the fervour of his passion lasted, she had been more than once aware of his having used his proudly displayed influence on that "sweet woman," by making a point that she should ask his *promessa sposa* to dinner; a discovery by no means calculated to enhance the value of the compliment. But in her intercourse with Mrs. Morley there was nothing of all this. It is true, that this lady seemed to be the most admired friend, and, in some sort, the most esteemed counsellor, of Mr. Mortimer, as well as of Mr. Fitzosborne; but it was quite evident that neither the one circumstance nor the other influenced her in the advances she made to Constance. Far, indeed, from becoming the means of her meeting with either, Mrs. Morley was ever fertile in contrivances to get rid of both, for it was then only that she seemed fully to enjoy the happiness of having Constance with her.

There is always an especial charm in the genuine unaffected kindness of persons who are rarely seen to bestow it. Mrs. Morley, notwithstanding the evident attraction of her talents and her grace, was strongly disposed to be both insolent and affected in her manner to people in general; but to Constance she was altogether a different being. It was an intercourse of intellect and heart that she seemed to seek, and that she seemed to find, and Constance, the still unspoiled Constance herself, was not more simply natural, or more rationally true, than the *manierée* and capricious Mrs. Morley.

It would have been impossible under any circumstances for Constance not to have been pleased with such an intercourse, but at the present moment it was most peculiarly delightful to her, for, in addition to its own charm, it saved her from much that she wished to avoid. Amidst blushes and self-reproof of the most painful pungency, Constance became more and more sensible to the terrible fact, that Mr. Fitzosborne, though no poet, outweighed the whole court of Apollo in justness of thinking and dignity of character; and to pass whole mornings where she was sure, that though he constantly came, he never, when she was there, was let in, was a relief to her conscience; while the equal certainty of avoiding the presentations to Mr. Mortimer's particular friends, whom he was perpetually bringing to Bruton Street, (perhaps to revive his own sinking flame by the fervour of their admiration,) was at least equally agreeable to her feelings.

But though Mrs. Morley seemed systematically to exclude these two gentlemen, as well as all others, from her interviews with Constance, she had no objection to talk about them; and of her cousin Fitzosborne she contrived, while relating the painful incidents of her life, to paint a portrait, finished by recurring to it again and again, which, had anything been wanting to convince Constance of his worth, would have supplied it. On these occasions, Constance had recourse to a famous piece of Berlin work which she was finishing for her grandmother, and, by dint of wrong stitches and difficult countings, contrived to avoid meeting the searching eye of the fair chronicler.

Upon one occasion, however, it seemed as if, for some reason or other, Mrs. Morley had taken offence at the innocent representation of a knight in armour, upon which Constance was employing her fingers and her eyes, for she suddenly exclaimed, "O Mabel, Mabel! if thou lovest me, my child, snatch that grim monster from the hands of Constance, and let me, for once in my life, have the pleasure of looking at her."

The little girl executed the commission with such readiness and zeal, that she speedily succeeded in removing the "eternal frame" which had taken up its abode on one of Mrs. Morley's tables, and ran off with it to some sanctum of her own.

"Now then, Constance, I want to ask you a question. After all I have told you of the noble heart of this man, of his unsparing severity to the self-willed eccentricity by which I have kept, despite my poverty, an insolent world at bay—of all the indulgence, and unwearying friendship with which this severity has been accompanied—of

his generosity to my destitute poor Mabel—tell me, tell me, Constance, tell me honestly, should you not be in love with Fitzosborne, were you not already in love—engaged to Mr. Mortimer?”

This attack was made so suddenly, and the manner of it was so unexpected—Mrs. Morley having taken both the hands of Constance in hers, and fixed her eyes upon her in a way neither to be baffled nor eluded, that every attempt at self-possession and composure was in vain, and bursting into an irrepressible passion of tears, she threw herself on the bosom of her friend, and exclaimed, “O Mrs. Morley! why do you ask me that question?”

“Because I wish to hear your answer, dear love,” replied Mrs. Morley, gently kissing her forehead. “But I do not mean to tease you about it.” And so saying, she withdrew herself from the arms of Constance, and left the room, remaining absent long enough to give the poor girl time to recover herself, and then returning with a sketch-book which she had filled in Italy, and which enabled her effectually to change the conversation.

From that day forward, Mrs. Morley talked no more to Constance of Mr. Fitzosborne; and as that gentleman almost immediately afterwards left London for Cheltenham, one source of the unfortunate girl's anxiety seemed removed, and she studied with all the power of her mind to prepare herself to fulfil worthily the duties she had with such lamentable rashness undertaken. Her manner became more settled and composed; the fitful brilliance of her cheek faded into paleness, and the eye which, a few short weeks before, had startled and entranced all other eyes by its wondrous brightness, now looked quietly on all things, as if nothing it saw had power to kindle the spirit which had heretofore sent forth such sparkles of intelligence from within.

Henry Mortimer felt himself doomed by fate for ever to pursue the shadow of the beauty which his own exquisite taste rather imagined than found, and mourned in bitterness of spirit over the conviction that no mortal mixture of earth's mould would ever be found worthy to fill a lasting place in his heart. The principle upon which he had for so many years acted, of never suffering any mistaken notions of honour to perpetuate an engagement of which his ethereal spirit was weary, would now speedily have restored poor Constance to the freedom for which she vainly pined, had he not heard, from more quarters than one, that the rich and high-born Fitzosborne was known to be distractedly in love with Miss Ridley, and was supposed to be quietly waiting for a favourable moment for convincing her that twenty thousand a year was worth all the rhymes in the world. The idea of such a termination to a conquest upon which he had been so universally congratulated, was still intolerable to him; and rather than endure it, he felt capable of a constancy worthy of the exemplary widow of Ulysses. Nevertheless, the idea of being actually married, and no longer at liberty to indulge in any more of those evanescent but delicious passions which had formed the history of his existence for the last dozen years, rested upon his heart with the weight of an incubus—when suddenly it struck him that it was an absurdity to suppose that any woman in love with him could be induced to bestow herself

upon another. He had seen many lovely girls droop and pine from the discoveries he had been compelled to make of their being unfit for his lasting companionship—but he remembered not a single instance of their having given the world reason to suppose that they were consoled—why then should he expect less lasting despair from Constance? O, could he but have been sure of this, what a lightness of spirit would again have been his!

For him to sound her feelings himself on the subject was impossible; but might he not learn from her dear new friend, Mrs. Morley, something that might throw a light on the subject? At any rate, the experiment was worth trying, and to Mrs. Morley he determined to go.

Although the terms on which he was with this lady approached in no degree to the tender friendship which united him to Mrs. Gardener Stewart, they were nevertheless more intimate in their intercourse than mere ordinary acquaintance. Mrs. Morley was fully aware of Mr. Mortimer's brilliant talents, and as he was not a person either of high rank or large fortune, she ventured to remit in his favour the insolence and the *persiflage* by which she thought proper to teach the high and mighty ones of her circle to understand that neither her poverty nor her will would ever make her consent to compromise her haughty independence for the best of them; while, on his side, the power he thus possessed of approaching at pleasure within the sort of barrier with which she so often surrounded herself, and thereby enjoying the rich fund of wit and whim which she was on all sides acknowledged to possess, gratified his vanity and amused his fancy, and often induced him to devote himself to her before the eyes of all men, with very magnificent contempt of her loudly-proclaimed poverty.

He found her alone, and apparently very glad to see him, and the conversation between them, as usual, became animated and amusing. A variety of subjects were discussed, and all with so much spirit as, though it could not make him forget his errand, rendered it difficult to set about the performance of it. This state of embarrassment, however, was at length put an end to by Mrs. Morley's suddenly exclaiming, "Have you heard the news about my cousin Fitzosborne, Mr. Mortimer?"

"No, indeed—what may the news be?" he replied, not without betraying some portion of the interest he felt.

"The great prize is caught at last," she returned. "Fitzosborne is immediately going to be married."

"Really? and may I inquire to whom, Mrs. Morley?"

"To some prodigiously great beauty at Cheltenham—that is all I can tell you—for the name has totally escaped me."

"Do you believe this report?"

"Most assuredly I do. I have long known that he had yielded his heart to this young beauty—and all that was wanting was the assurance that he had gained hers in return. I heartily hope she is a nice person, for I have the greatest regard for him."

"Is the lady in London?" inquired the curious Mortimer.

"You may answer that question yourself," she replied, "when I tell you that he set off yesterday for Cheltenham."

"Permit me to assure you, my dear Mrs. Morley, of my best wishes for your cousin's happiness. He is an admirable person, and no more like the ordinary run of young men than I to Hercules. Good morning—pray give my love to Mabel."

"Good morning," she responded, while the door closed after him, and she murmured, as she listened to his departing footsteps—"Wake when some vile thing is near!"

From the residence of Mrs. Morley, Mr. Mortimer repaired to Bruton Street, inexpressibly relieved in mind, and with a heart light enough to take wing again like a bee, or a butterfly, in search of beauty and sweetness, wherever they might be found. He wisely determined, however, to do nothing hastily. "Heaven knows," thought he, as he pursued his way—"Heaven knows that no heart was ever formed more capable of constancy than mine! My soul pants for the bliss unspeakable which is to be found in enduring love, and in that alone! But alas! how delicately does such a spirit as mine shrink from faults and defects which seem invisible to grosser eyes! O sensibility, thou art a dangerous gift! yet without thee, where would be the poet's wing?"

Nothing could be more amiable than the frame of mind in which he reached the drawing-room of Mrs. Hartley. "No, I will do nothing rashly," he repeated. "The lovely Constance shall be fairly tried, and if it prove that she deserves the endless passion of a heart like mine, it shall be hers—I swear it!"

On entering the room, he found it as usual occupied by the whole family, in addition to which were Sir James Ridley and Captain Markham. Mortimer, with the privilege of an accepted lover, drew a chair behind that occupied by Constance, and placing himself in it, began conversing with her in a low whisper, to the entire exclusion of Penelope and Markham, who, seated close beside her, had been in close conversation with her previous to Mr. Mortimer's entrance.

There was one point, among others, in which there certainly was as little sympathy between this affianced pair as it was well possible to conceive. From the moment Mr. Mortimer had been accepted, his first object had apparently been to proclaim to all the world that he was so. While this *étalage* of love-making was to Constance so extremely painful, as to have almost entirely robbed of all pleasure the short interval during which she had remained persuaded that the engagement she had so hastily formed was *not* likely to be repented at leisure. This feeling of repugnance at having the most sacred feeling of her heart thus ostentatiously displayed, could scarcely become stronger, as the intensity of the feeling became less; but a multitude of other painful emotions were now joined with it, very decidedly rendering the last state of the unhappy girl worse than the first. At the moment above described, and when Markham and Penelope quietly withdrew themselves from the vicinity which Mr. Mortimer so plainly showed them was not agreeable to him, Constance felt very strongly disposed to rise also, and walk after them; and as Mr. Mortimer proceeded very unceremoniously to amuse himself by playing with a lock of her hair, as he muttered Milton's words,

—"or with the tangles of Næara's hair,"

it is very probable that she would have done so, had not the door at that moment opened, to admit the person of Mr. William Weston.

Much to the surprise, and still more to the satisfaction of Constance, this gentleman had withdrawn himself altogether after the day on which he had done her the honour of offering her his hand in marriage, thereby convincing both herself and her friends most agreeably, that they had erred in supposing he had blundered as to the meaning of the words with which Constance had declined his proposal. But often as it happens that blunders arise upon subjects of this kind, when agitations, sometimes of one nature, and sometimes of another, make a clear understanding difficult, no young lady, assisted by the counsel of a party of intelligent female friends, ever so completely misunderstood the predicament in which she was placed, as did Constance relatively to Mr. William Weston.

Within a very few hours of the interview which, as he declared, had made him the happiest of men, this young gentleman, who seemed as remarkable for his filial affection as for his devoted love, left London for Devonshire, for the purpose of conveying *vivâ voce* to his exemplary parents the result of the important negotiation which he had opened, with their full approbation and consent, with the lady of his choice.

"How, William, hast thou sped?" were the words, or very nearly the words, with which his mother greeted him, and his reply conveyed the most lively satisfaction to both their hearts.

"She has received the proposal of my hand, chere maman, exactly as I most wished she should receive it."

"Thank God!" exclaimed his venerable father. "Then I may charge the estate, William, with another thousand pounds for my favourite grandchild! And the beautiful Constance accepted you at once, did she, my dear boy?"

"All she said and did, père respectable! was absolutely perfect, and I am the happiest of men."

As all this is, as it were, in a parenthesis; the account of the lover's intercourse with his parents must not be given at length, though the days and weeks devoted to the necessary examination of the actual state of the family affairs might furnish a most interesting narrative. Suffice it to say, that after having spent one month in travelling half round England for the purpose of personally informing his sisters of the bright prospect opening before him, and another in settling with his father the form and manner of the settlements to be prepared, he gaily set off again for London, notwithstanding a slight check received from old Mrs. Ridley, when he dutifully waited upon her to ask her blessing.

"Don't be a fool, William Weston—you had better ask *me* to marry you," was the only reply he received from her. But it mattered not. "*Vive la folie*," seemed to be the motto of the family with which he was about to connect himself as well as his own, and accordingly he prepared to claim the hand of his beautiful bride, determined to win an additional smile by describing to her the whimsical demeanour of her playful grandmamma upon the subject of their loves.

He now entered Mrs. Hartley's drawing-room with the happy and

triumphant aspect which befitted his feelings, and having gracefully slid round the room for the purpose of paying his compliments to every individual in it, he finally approached his *ci-devant* ward with an air that seemed to say, "Those were my visits, but *you* are my home."

Constance, remembering their last interview, coloured and looked embarrassed; upon which Mr. William Weston, using a little gentle violence towards the chair in which Mr. Mortimer was seated, contrived to place himself immediately behind her, and having slightly apologised to the gentleman he had displaced by saying, "Excuse me, sir!" he bent over her, and pronounced with admirable distinctness, though not perfectly in a Parisian accent, "*Charmante Constance! tu éprouve donc la douce agitation de l'amour, en me revoyant?*"

Greatly provoked, yet hardly able to avoid laughing at the indescribable absurdity of his words, manner, and appearance, Constance demurely replied, "I am sorry, Mr. William Weston, to perceive that the answer I gave when you last spoke to me appears to have been so totally forgotten or misunderstood. As an acquaintance of long standing, and as one of the guardians appointed by my father, I wish to treat you with every possible degree of respect, but this cannot go the length of permitting you to address me thus."

"*Ma reine fantasque!*" he replied; "*que tu es jolie avec tes petits caprices! Eh que je t'adore malgré ta douce résistance!*"

At this moment Constance caught the round and often unmeaning eye of her brother fixed upon her with a look of such unmitigated astonishment, that despite every effort to prevent it, she yielded to the absurdity of the scene, and once again threw her persevering lover into ecstasies by bursting into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

"*Ma belle étourdie!*" cried Mr. William Weston, seizing her hand and kissing it very elegantly. "*Ah! tout va bien! Tu sais comme ton amant est gai—et il te trouve divine, mais absolument divine, avec cet charmant petit ricanement!*"

"Have the kindness to inform me, madam, if you conceive this personage to be insane?" said Mr. Mortimer, rising; "and if you do, whether this mode of treating him be assumed for the purpose of bringing *him* to his senses—or *me*?"

"Weston, come with me," exclaimed Markham, approaching, and seizing the arm of the pertinacious lover with the freedom of an old acquaintance; "I believe in my soul that you are intoxicated."

"Gracious heaven! and this amuses her!" cried Mortimer with a groan, and at the same time covering his eyes with his hands as if the spectacle before him was too terrible to look at.

"For God's sake, Mr. Markham, take him away," said Mrs. Hartley, immediately adopting the idea that this extraordinary *ci-devant* jeune homme was intoxicated, and feeling really shocked and horrified at the effect his conduct was evidently producing on Mortimer. "I knew not, Constance, that our unfortunate neighbour was ever seen thus, either before dinner or after it, but we really cannot permit him to remain here. Get him out of the room, Markham, I entreat you."

With a look intended to express the most momentous mental struggle, Mr. Mortimer was now making his way towards the door, when Markham, supposing that Constance must be suffering most

acutely from witnessing the effect which the scene was producing on him, quitted the arm of the puzzled and now discomfited Weston, and placing himself between the retreating poet and the door, exclaimed, "For God's sake, Mr. Mortimer, do not misunderstand this business. Pray do not leave the house till everything has been explained to you."

"Everything *is* explained to me, sir," returned Mortimer, with inexpressible dignity and disdain. "You little know the man you speak to, if you imagine that, after that lady's undisguised enjoyment of this disgraceful scene, I can require anything farther." Having said this, the poet waited for no farther parley, but stalked out of the room with the air of a hero.

Every eye was turned on Constance; but she remained not long enough to enable any one to form an opinion on the effect which these words produced on her, for, immediately passing through the door which led to the second drawing-room, she was out of sight almost before the other door had closed upon Mortimer.

"Leave us, Mr. Weston, pray leave us," said the greatly shocked Mrs. Hartley; and she had no need to repeat the command, for the unfortunate disciple of *la gaie France*, being at length convinced that he had made some slight mistake in the estimate he had formed of his ward's character, made a retreat as hasty and much less dignified than that of the gentleman whom he had driven from the field.

"How in the world will this end?" cried Mrs. Hartley, in an accent of much vexation. "What an enormous scandal it will make, if this match, so universally talked of, should be broken off!"

"I shall be devilish glad of it—I shall, upon my life and soul!" cried Sir James. "It would serve Constance perfectly right if she were to die an old maid. And she may leave her paltry thirty thousand to one of my children, if she will. It would be a devilish deal better than her marrying that conceited quill-driver."

"You droll creature!" cried Margaretta, tickling the tip of his ear with the end of a golden pencil-case which he had just presented to her.

"Won't it be odd if it's broken off?" said Caroline.

"Go to her, dearest," whispered Markham to Penelope; "I fear she will be very wretched!"

Penelope replied by a silent nod, and left the room.

STRAY SONNETS.

I.

AMBITION OF YOUTH.

As I have seen slight gouts of silver foam
 From waves turmoiling in a nook of rocks,
 Whirl'd upwards in the vapour-clothed dome
 Of Heaven ; or seen the trimly powder'd locks
 Of thistles, lifted by the starting breeze,
 And launch'd on paths uptending ; as I've seen
 The balanced lark his stayless perch with ease,
 Retaining in the clouds, as he did mean
 To gaze into the window-ports of Heaven ;
 Or the clear spark from chimneyed forge at night,
 That soars as though by some soul-impulse driven ;
 Its puny fire would scale th' immortal height ;
 So youth leaps up, and thinks, whate'er betide,
 To win earth's highest seats, her glory and her pride.

II.

ITS DESTINY.

But down yon bank there dies a hoar oak-tree,
 On which the brave sea-foam is chang'd to salt,
 Nor far away, a heap of earth, and see,
 The thistle seed here makes inglorious halt ;
 The heaven-attempting bird in yonder field
 Stoops close to keep three wide-mouth'd fledglings warm ;
 Long since, the night-breath hath reduced to yield
 The crimson sparks, that blots on flowers do form.
 Thus hearts that leapt with glorious hope at morn,
 That fed itself and on itself relied,
 Chill'd by the cold world's cruel clasp, outworn
 By want and woe, sink down at eventide ;
 Like gleams of morning heralding the sun
 Moves hope to man,—as bright, as early gone.

III.

*Της ἐπεβην γυμνος, γυμνος θ' ὑπο γαίαν ἀπειμι,
 Καὶ τι ματὴν μοχθῶ, γυμνον ὄρων το τέλος.*—ANTHOLOGY.

Seeing the end is nakedness, to toil
 For wealth or power, or that infected breath
 Of mobs, called honour, is to make for death
 More trappings to undo, and richer spoil
 For his rank touch and loathly kiss to soil.
 Seeing the hoarded gold, that glimmereth
 The miser's polar star, though tongueless saith,
 "The last sad day these careful pains shall foil,"—
 Cease thou to hang thy wishes on base clay,
 Which this day gives, but that shall tear away ;
 Yet know, O man, that Death's abhorred control
 Clings to the trunk, but cannot strip the soul.
 Then welcome, Truth ! be welcome, genial Lore !
 What ye shall give we keep for evermore.

TALES OF THE PUMP-ROOM.

THE MARRIED OFFICER.

IN these "piping times of peace," when more than half the senior and the whole junior United Service Club may be heard echoing with a sigh the words of Othello,

"Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars
That make ambition virtue, O farewell!
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, th' ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious war,"—

it sometimes amuses an old hand like myself—a bachelor moreover, and, as such, exempt from the evils he commemorates—to recollect how appropriate were often in more stirring and regretted periods of active service, in the mouths of married officers, the preceding words of Othello's pathetic exclamation,

"Farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content!"

It may be very well for a snug major without encumbrance, just shut out by an unlucky figure in his *anno domini* from the benefit of a tardy visit; or for the aspiring ensign, who foresees in the present state of the Temple of Janus every probability of reviving in his own person the exploded title of "ancient," to rail at the double-visaged deity, with whose one too pacific countenance he happens alone to have made acquaintance, and seeks the somewhat profane toast of a "hot war and speedy promotion." But there is one class of unfortunate quondam heroes to whom reminiscences of warfare must come in such shapes of unmitigated evil, that whenever I hear such bewailing, in oblivion of former woes, their present garrison idleness, I generally tell, for the refreshment of their memories and the benefit of the youngsters present, the veracious "miseries of a married officer," as they came under my own actual observation in the person of that most luckless of Benedicts, my unfortunate chum, Ned Harris.

Ned and I got our commissions on the same day, and through the same channel; but the antipodes could hardly be wider apart than our destinations. For while I, as the son of the colonel commanding a cavalry regiment, performed my easy noviciate in my father's corps amid the balls and belles of Dublin, Ned's fate was to sail alone and unfriended to join his in the then comparatively terra incognita of India. There was no want, however, of belles—nay, nor when weather permitted, of "balls" neither, on board the spacious vessel in which Ned performed the voyage. Perhaps it had been better for him that a cannon "ball"—at that time no unusual intruder on the deck of an Indiaman—had cut short his troubled career, than that the millstone

of matrimony should have been hung by the spells of beauty around his devoted neck.

Among the "venture" of damsels, then forming a regular portion of every "assorted cargo" for the yet unglutted Indian market, there were many aspiring ones, to whom the very existence of a subaltern elect was matter of doubtful recognition. But their disdain served only perhaps to enhance the value of the smiles which a poor penniless girl going out upon sufferance to the reluctant hospitality of distant relations could afford to bestow on one nearly as friendless and forlorn as herself. All that the two children (for such they both were) thought of during the tedious voyage was, that they would each now, amid the wider ocean of India, have one to love and care for them. Matrimony they, with the sapient self-denial of nineteen, wisely adjourned till a slight addition, from whence they did not inquire, to the reversionary balance (some five and twenty or thirty pounds a piece) of their respective outfit, should render it less decidedly imprudent.

With about the same degree of knowledge of the new world on which they were entering, as of the old one they had left behind, Miss L. was wafted from the ship to the "garden house" on the river of her wealthy mercantile relation, and Ned borne on a palanquin to the "up country" scene of his military education. This soon produced, in addition to the proverbial dulness of an out-station, and the languor of recent arrival in a hot climate, the sickness of hope deferred in the mind of the youthful lover; and, giving prudence to the winds, he wrote to his betrothed in such desponding terms, that she soon listened to his wild scheme of meeting him half way from Calcutta, to rescue him by immediate matrimony from suicide.

Her friends, however, had other and more ambitious views; and it was not until all hopes of dragooning her into a marriage with the senior partner of the house had utterly failed, that the poor girl, furnished with the *de quoi* for the wild-goose scheme by the relenting old nabob himself, set out for Allahabad with a casual female acquaintance, to assume that saddest of sad appellations, a subaltern's wife on service.

It was not, however, soon destined to be hers; for Ned, boy as he was in everything, was easily drawn in to join for a single day in a wild-hog hunt with the party he accompanied down; and while nobody else was hurt, or even in jeopardy, the poor bridegroom, inexperienced in the sport, was singled out for attack, and by the swerving of his ill-trained horse had his leg fractured against a tree, and his life with difficulty saved for future miseries.

This *mal à propos* rencontre occurred two hundred miles from the station where his agonized bride, doomed to trespass for weeks of anxious suspense on the hospitality of utter strangers, at length, in desperation announced her intention of making her way *coute qu'il coute* to his side, imploring him to let her find there the chaplain of the nearest settlement, that their fates might henceforth be irrevocably united.

This was easier said than done. Nor was the couch of pain of the wounded hero rendered a bed of roses by hearing that, while stretched

needlessly and foolishly upon it, his regiment had unexpectedly been called on service, had won laurels, and, ah! more grievously to be regretted still, gained a handsome sum of prize-money; Ned's slender share in which would have gone far towards the comforts of his now no longer solitary bungalow.

But was it ever to be otherwise than solitary? Fate seemed, alas! to have decided against it. The chaplain of M., urbane and benevolent as he was known to be, and frank and friendly as was his acceptance of the summons, failed at the appointed *rendezvous*; and poor Jane, feeling to the uttermost her anomalous position in the ceded tent of a hunting comrade of her still disabled betrothed, began to wish she had endured a little longer the tyranny of her Calcutta cousins, or even smiled more complacently on the old head of the firm.

A letter from the worthy chaplain, pleading severe illness for his non-appearance, and recommending the couple to expedite matters by coming to him, found her ready to travel to the antipodes to get rid of her present awkwardness. But (let no one think it is a romance I am inditing, death makes short work in India with the best and wisest) their arrival at M., exhausted alike in strength and resources, found the worthy chaplain not only dead, but in that grave which closes so quickly on the victims of Indian disease. What was now to be done? No chaplaincy existed within a circuit of at least a hundred miles, and to travel that distance implied expense which their united means would not afford.

There are extremities, however, in which Providence comes as it were visibly in aid of the most improvident of its offspring. The wife of an officer of rank, to whom Jane's Calcutta connexions were known, at least by name, happened to pass on her way up the country, and was easily prevailed on to include in her suite the poor friendless girl, whom, however, she took the opportunity (no less charitably as she thought) to dissuade from fulfilling her imprudent engagement by a full statement of its impending miseries, and even by the promise of a home in her own establishment.

But poor Jane had not lived so long on hope deferred to relinquish the bright vision when at length within her grasp. Thanking Lady G. for her well-meant counsels, but yet more grateful to her in heart for delaying her journey a day to sanction the wedding, than for the substantial gifts by which she gladdened a marriage she could not conscientiously approve, her *protégée* forgot at length all her toils and sorrows in the long-coveted name of Ned Harris's wife.

It was, to be sure, remarked as ominous by more than the superstitious native attendants, that the bridegroom's fractured limb, irritated by recent travelling, threw out an ill-timed splinter, which obliged him to be married on crutches; and that Lady G.'s wedding-ring, kindly lent for the occasion, proved so much too wide as to drop off during the ceremony. But "love laughs" at presentiments as well as at "locksmiths," and Jane felt, when fairly on the road to Meerut with the man for whom she had endured so much, as if their mutual troubles were for ever at an end.

It will not be wondered at that their first happy journey was a somewhat lingering one. Lady G. had provided amply for its com-

forts, and where these are attainable, travelling in the Upper Provinces of India, at the season when a burst of universal verdure has succeeded to the chill and dreary monsoon, is luxurious indeed. The lovers could have wandered for weeks amid emerald meadows and stately groves, pitching their noontide tent under the shade of some tall pagodah of old, its ruins canopied with Nature's wild exuberance of foliage, and its glassy tank with a mantle of new-born water-lilies.

But indulgence, even though comparatively harmless, is generally destined in this world to be counterbalanced by corresponding inconveniences. Not only the original leave, but the sick certificates of poor Ned had been long exhausted; and his pacific progress in quest of a bride, when his battalion was enduring hardships in the field, while matter of mirth to even his good-natured companions, furnished the more sarcastic with innuendos, and the witlings of the regiment with bad jokes, in which praises of his gallantry at the expense of his valour formed prominent features.

This small artillery, Ned—thin-skinned as the raw recruit (a griffin especially) proverbially is—thought he could have borne, had it been aimed at himself alone. But the very head-quarter of gossip is an Indian cantonment; and its few female denizens, finding they could not compete in youth or beauty with the new-comer, resolved to give her as little opportunity as possible of eclipsing their maturer charms. Her rash departure from Calcutta, invidiously styled an elopement—her subsequent embarrassments at M., and the equivocal position from which she was rescued by Lady G., (whose patronage, while it ought to have disarmed, perhaps only sharpened malice,) were sarcastically commented on, till even the more charitable began to look coldly on the poor little bride; and she learned to feel that even brides, and happy ones too, could shed bitter tears, and be wounded by the slights of those, whose united smiles could have added nothing to the sum of wedded happiness.

Once married, Jane had supposed herself independent of the world; but had she possessed even a loftier and more privileged retreat from its frowns than a rude tent, or reed-thatched bungalow, her spirit was too gentle and her feelings too sensitive to sustain her long under the undisguised coldness of the ladies, and yet more distressingly obtrusive attentions of the gentlemen whom they had prejudiced. Terrified lest the latter should be observed and resented by her husband, it was almost a relief to poor Jane to find that differences, in which she had ostensibly at least no share, compelled him to negotiate an exchange; though, in addition to an expensive journey to another presidency, he lost by the removal several steps in rank, for which (as his brother officers failed not to remark) he had been indebted to the casualties of a service in which he had borne no part.

Still, however, so incalculably inferior are mere physical sufferings to the irksome shafts of successful malice, the privations of a land journey, (far different in outward means and appliances from their bridal one,) nay, even the "sea change" of a boisterous voyage to Madras, seemed light in comparison with the petty tortures of M.; nor did the rude reception given by its well-known surf to the guests whom it unceremoniously cast ashore, throw over the drenched and

shivering Jane a damp as chill and permanent as the inhospitable bearing of the sisterhood she had left.

Here all at least was peace and outward courtesy; and precisely perhaps because it was so, did poverty, the evil hitherto kept in the shade by greater annoyances, assert its power to mar the married soldier's lot. It was not that Jane, now cordially received into society, could not afford to mingle in the friendly circle—for this she had in her home and husband an ample compensation; but a subaltern in the king's army, to exist at Madras, should be alone and unencumbered, and to incur debt, even under those circumstances, is nearly inevitable.

Will it be believed by the young and thoughtless, whom experience has never taught how the sweetest and most legitimate emotions may be embittered by harassing cares, that Harris looked forward with more of anxiety than exultation to the proud fond title of "father;" and that Jane sometimes dropped a misgiving tear over the humble wardrobe of her expected infant? In its first cry, and first smile, however, all was for the moment forgotten; and no heir to a dukedom was ever greeted with more heartfelt welcome than the poor babe whose only inheritance was a parent's love.

It seemed indeed a babe of hope and promise, the harbinger—alas! a delusive one—of something like amended prospects to the luckless Ned and his wife. An old grandmother in Ireland, who had declined, by opening her arms to Jane, to obviate the necessity for her going to India, felt a check of conscience for the destitution she had partly occasioned; and hearing that Jane, from a sense of duty, unmingled with hope of immediate benefit, had given her name to her little girl—sent out, not only the means of comfortable transport home for mother and child, but such an invitation as opened, on a future emergency, her house and heart to her granddaughter.

It was at an eventful period that Ned set foot once more on his native shore. The very crisis of the struggle with France had arrived, and regiments were daily doubling their strength by volunteers from the militia, the organization of which into second battalions called for the most unremitting exertion on the part of the officers promoted on the occasion. Of these Ned was happily one, and consigning his wife and child (for once without a care on their account) to her reconciled friends in Ireland, he bent his mind for the first time with undivided energy and steadiness to his regimental duties.

These proved sufficiently arduous to engross for a while the whole thoughts of the new captain. But the parental feelings which only slumbered in his *too* soft and sensitive bosom were fully awakened by the illness and threatened death of his absent infant; and though the leave extorted by his distress was of the shortest possible description, from the avowed expectation that the regiment would be sent on foreign service, yet such was the incredulity then felt as to any British land force actually taking part in continental warfare, that instead of leaving, like a sensible man, his delicate child and harassed wife with his grandmother in Ireland, Ned, in a transport of ill-timed conjugal affection, disobliged, nay, unhappily alienated the old lady,

by carrying them all off to Ipswich—to find the regiment gone—already embarked for Germany at Ramsgate.

There are few, methinks, even of the keenest of our sighers for the joys of “actual service,” who will particularly envy Ned, fain to join at sea, as best he might, in squally November weather, with little more baggage than the clothes he had on, the transport containing his corps; or his tossings in the north sea, under the harrowing reflection that (thanks to his folly!) his wife and child were left in a strange country, without so much as an acquaintance, and with no supply of money but what might be wrung from a very cautious regimental agent, by an order for which there were no funds due.

It was dishonoured accordingly; and Jane must have literally begged her way back to her offended grandmother, had not a less painful resource most unexpectedly presented itself, in her being recognized at church (altered and faded as she already was) by an attendant on her Indian patroness, Lady G., whose husband happened providentially to be in command of the district. Lady G., as has been already seen, was the best natured of women. The asylum Jane had, perhaps rashly, declined in India, was not the less benevolently forced on her in England; and for a few short weeks her mind and frame were allowed to recruit beneath a sunshine of prosperity; the last, alas! to dawn upon her chequered fortunes.

The expedition, it is well known to all military men, found Germany (even in December) too hot for it, under the scorching influence of the “sun of Austerlitz;” and its intended return and probable destination became known, but too early, to Jane’s official protectors. It was now her turn to act the marplot, and, pardonably perhaps, anxious to embrace, after the perils of actual service, her beloved husband, no remonstrance could dissuade her from flying to join him at the expected point of disembarkation—Yarmouth.

No sooner were the transports off that port, than with fatal ingenuity she contrived to get intelligence conveyed to her husband, that she eagerly awaited him at the neighbouring village of Caistor; nor was Ned, poor fellow! whose heart always got the better of his head, slow in obeying the summons; though, as senior officer, and consequently commanding on board his vessel, a misgiving should have arisen as to possible change in their ultimate destination. It took place—a sudden order arrived for all the transports to proceed to the Downs; and, worse still, for an immediate return from each, of all casualties during the campaign and voyage.

I leave those who served in the days of cocked-hats and martinets, to estimate the amount of displeasure which the “report” of Captain Harris “missing,” ere the troops under his command had touched British ground, coupled with his suspicious absence “without leave” at the period of their embarkation, was calculated to draw down upon his devoted head; and a journey from Yarmouth to Ramsgate not being in 1805 accelerated either by steam or rail-road, (clogged especially as his was with a wife and child,) and retarded by the want of all means of getting on beyond the snail’s pace of the miscalled *diligences* of the day, his name might have ceased to figure in the list

of the army ere his exculpation could be listened to, had not a good word been put in, at his agonized wife's entreaty, by the compassionate Sir John G.

For a time, even after the regiment had been stationed in snug quarters at B., poor Jane could never listen to the howl of the "excluded tempest" without fancying Ned enduring on her account, and without a single comfort, the hardships of a winter debarkation on the shores of the Baltic; or reproaching herself as the cause of his having been "severely," though privately "admonished," on his return home.

But people cannot be always unhappy, even in this "working-day world;" and by degrees, in the society of her good-natured husband, and the smiles of her little girl, Jane forgot there were such things as foreign service, or cross commanding officers, nay, even

"That worst of fear
To married ear,"

a *route*—in unmilitary phrase a removal.

It came, however, and as usual, just when least expected; when they had begun to feel comfortably settled, when the respectable families of the little town had come to a decision on *their* respectability, and Jane's innate good-breeding, refreshed by her late *séjour* under the roof of Lady G., had, for the first time, opened to her a place in congenial society.

But, pleasant as all this might be, and vexatious as it was to be hurried off from it, yet it was some relief, both to purse and person, (for Jane was in a situation to endure fatigue,) that there was no land journey in the case, and one to whom the horrors of a transport were known only by description, felt ready to encounter them for the advantages of the mild climate and cheap living of Jersey.

The "Channel Islands," however, now, thanks to steam, the favourite object of a few hours' summer exertion, were not then to be reached so easily. The voyage was often of indefinite length, and if there was in the whole convoy a dirty vessel, or a dull sailer, Ned's luck, as a matter of course, gave him and his family a berth on board. But scanty and wretched, beyond even the "worst inn's worst room," as Jane found the limited accommodation afforded by her floating prison, to a lady—that lady did not escape, for monopolizing it, some unpleasant grumbling on the part of a few ungallant bachelor "old hands" in the regiment, who despised her husband in their hearts for being married, and loved to touch him on the tenderest point by reflections upon his wife.

These of course he resented, and if Ned had slept all the worse on the Baltic for thinking of Jane left penniless at home, she in her turn did not toss the less on the scanty crib in the Channel for hearing (as all may be heard in a little coasting schooner) occasional high words in which her name occurred, between her husband and his inconvenienced brother officers. It blew over, however, and so did at length the baffling gale which kept them ten days almost in sight of St. Helier's.

The nice little cheerful town would, in Jane's revived taste for
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society, have been a welcome residence ; but it was not so to be ; and the destination of Ned's company to an outlying station gave her no choice but of barrack accommodations and barrack society.

Of the eligibility of either for ladies, I entertain myself a very indifferent opinion ; but Jane would have consulted her own comfort and her husband's happiness more if she had put up cheerfully with the former, and shut her eyes to pranks (not perhaps altogether defensible) on the part of a parcel of idle youngsters, by which she, no less idly, conceived herself personally aggrieved.

If on board the packet it was on his wife's account that a coolness had grown up between Ned and his older comrades, it was (as the country folks say) "all along of her" also that something hotter broke out between the uxorious captain and the boys of the regiment. Between the two, his position in it became so intolerable, that he was glad to escape, even at the expense of another removal, by applying for a recruiting party (which he was aware would, ere long, be sent out) to the south of Ireland.

He had rather, however, miscalculated the time within which his application would be answered, and felt inclined, for once, to quarrel with the promptitude of the ruling powers. The order for embarkation, on which he had not reckoned for two or three months, found him in the awkward and characteristic scrape of his wife being too much on the eve of her confinement to be able to accompany him till the event should be over.

That under such circumstances Ned should leave his party to make the best of their way without him, and skulk on the island till his wife's recovery, was perhaps, though wrong, only natural. But it was no less natural that so hazardous a step should draw down retribution on his head, in the very offending quarter. From the advanced state of the season, the vessel in which he and his family at length embarked encountered dreadful gales, and was wrecked (on the rocks called the "Caskets") with total loss of all on board except the lives of the crew and passengers ; and the whole worldly possessions of Ned and his household,—the little comforts which he had struggled hard to purchase (and for which, had the accident occurred while accompanying his party, a liberal allowance would have been made him by government) became the prey of the skilful wreckers, for which the coasts of England have long been famous, or rather infamous.

For this there would have been, on other occasions, humanly speaking, no remedy. But, as had rarely happened amid the vicissitudes of Ned's shuttlecock existence, he found himself, most opportunely, on arriving in Ireland, for once master of a home of his own ; one, too, not indifferently stocked with comforts to which he and his had long been strangers. His wife's grandmother had lately died, bequeathing her old-fashioned but roomy house in Castle M., with all the odd accumulations such mansions are wont to contain, of Irish linen, and uncut silks, dumpy watches, and rose diamond rings, and a small sum indeed (but Golconda at the moment in poor Ned's eyes) of money to the sole use of her "beloved and unfortunate grandchild."

The reading of the will cost poor Jane some "natural tears ;" but that she "wiped them soon," and gave herself up with all the zest of

novelty to the hitherto unknown luxury of "home," may be easily believed. Ned shared her enjoyment, and it may be doubted whether she felt most pleased in conferring, or he in owing to one still so dear to his heart, the delight of comparative independence. The headquarters of the party at Y— were so complaisantly situated that Ned, without dereliction of duty, could pass much of his time with his wife and child, and it was no small enhancement of the rare feeling of affluence that it enabled him (soon after his transfer to the first battalion of his late regiment in the same quarter) to rejoice without trembling in the prospect of an impending addition to his family. That Jane, with such an event before her, had felt it paradise to be safely anchored, even should an inopportune move of the regiment unexpectedly occur, will not be doubted by any poor matron similarly circumstanced. But nothing seemed further from probability than the arrival of a *route*, and it was within a month of the time when Ned, sanguine as ever, and his mind as much set on an heir as if a dukedom were in abeyance, had hoped to clasp in his arms his long-desired boy, that an order, sudden as a thunder-clap, for his regiment to embark at Cork on secret service, came as the knell to all his high-wrought expectations.

Notions, wild as despair and disappointment could make them, of throwing up his commission and staying at home with Jane at such a crisis, passed for a moment across poor Ned's dizzy brain. But had he not been too thoroughly a soldier, though an uxorious one, to quit, in the face of actual service, a profession he really loved, there was remaining sense enough in his own cranium, and abundance in Jane's, to remind them that an old tumble-down Irish house, and some six hundred pounds, would form but a scanty heritage for the babe to whose proud destinies they unconsciously looked forward. Jane, often as her heart would sink when her hands were unoccupied, busied herself cheerfully in her husband's hasty equipment, and, painful as is the association in the mind of a soldier's wife between peril and prize-money, would sometimes hint at the probabilities of the latter on a secret expedition; and playfully bid Ned bring a christening cup from some then often menaced South American El Dorado.

So between the bustle inseparable from a hurried embarkation, the excitement natural to a soldier in the prospect of active service, the well-acted cheerfulness of his heroic little wife, and his confidence in the skill and kindness of the good old regimental doctor, whom no military punctilios interposed to prevent from opportunely resigning and staying to take care of her, Ned set out for Cork to join his regiment, with feelings widely different from any under whose influence he had ever before, since his marriage, set foot in a transport.

He could not, however, altogether forget the unfortunate result, a fatal one to the infant, and nearly so to the mother herself, of his wife's last accouchement; and as he looked down from the hills above the noble Cove of Cork, or the wind-bound flotilla containing the expedition, inwardly invoked Eolus to be spiteful enough to withhold the favouring breezes till the event could, on the present occasion, be ascertained.

His prayers, to his own astonishment, seemed really to have fixed

every weathercock and vane for weeks in the precise position most hostile to the wishes of his impatient comrades, and most propitious to his own; and he half felt the imagined responsibility of deranging for his private convenience the deep-laid plans of diplomacy and generalship. Emboldened by the apparent immobility of the elements, he was just meditating doing a very foolish, and, in some respects, cruel thing, by asking leave to gratify himself, and torture poor Jane, by the pangs of a second parting, when he was goaded, by a change in the tone of the bulletin, which he almost daily received from the old doctor, to the desperate measure of making an unauthorized trip to Castle M.

Late one sultry evening, when amid the ennui of long detention he had caught himself looking on the drooping flags and flapping sails of the convoy, with something like a participation in the general longing to be off, a letter was put into his hands by a dusty bare-legged gossoon, containing such an account of his wife's precarious condition, as betrayed, spite of its guarded tenor, the extent of the fears of her medical attendant. "If you could," wrote he, "under the circumstances, get leave for a few hours, perhaps it might be a comfort to all parties; but detained as the expedition has long been, it is ten to one, I well know, whether you would choose to ask, or the commanding officer risk granting it. Your wife is in the hands of a kind Providence, and all that, under it, man can do for her, you may believe shall not be wanting."

"And surely I should be less than man, were I to hesitate to ask, or Colonel G. to grant me a few hours, when, for aught I know, the dear creature may be gone before I can get to her!" exclaimed Ned, rushing wildly down the steep street of Cove to the inn on the quay, where the head-quarters of his commanding officer had been so tediously established. It was to find them, for once, deserted! Colonel G., weary of Irish inn fare, and of his own company, (for his subalterns had long taken refuge from tavern bills on board their respective transports,) had gone off to dine on board the commodore's frigate; and the idea of rowing off a couple of miles to ask a very problematical favour, and thus losing the little remaining light for a rugged, hilly, up-country journey, was too much for the agonized husband to endure. To take French leave, and profit by his commander's probable absence till the morrow, was a temptation too strong to be resisted; and after an anxious glance (the five-thousandth within the last few days) at the fixed vanes and sleeping sails of the apparently spell-bound convoy, Ned electrified the gossoon, who still hung about him, wondering that a gentleman in a fine red coat should be so much out of sorts, by asking if he knew any one who could hire him a horse and car to Castle M.?

"Sure it's my uncle can do that same, your honour," said the lad; "and" (his little eyes twinkling with the thought of thus returning in triumph to his native village) "sure it's myself will drive yees with all the pleasure in life. I've druv' for the Thomond Arms ever since I wor the height of a leprechaun."

"Quick as lightning, then," cried poor Ned, "a light car and a fast horse! and not a word mind, for your life, to any one but your uncle."

"Lave me alone for that," said the urchin, with a grin of intelligence, "since it aint plasing to gentlefolks to have their doings talked over, night airings especially."

Soon—almost soon enough for Ned's impatience—car, horse, and urchin, met him (to elude observation) at the top of the hill on which the town of Cove is built; and rapidly, even in his estimation, did they bowl over the few miles of comparatively smooth high road which occurred before striking across the hilly ridge intervening between him and the place of his destination. No sooner, however, was slackening his speed inevitable, than the Irish boy, entering as if instinctively into the state of poor Ned's feelings, strove to beguile them with tales and legends; which, failing of course in his present mood to amuse, had at least the salutary effect of lulling him into temporary forgetfulness. The kind lad's object thus attained, he drove the more briskly on, till at length, good stuff as his bit of a ragged Irish blood mare was, he was fain, just as the early dawn at that season dispersed the scarce settled shadows of the brief midsummer night—to stop at a farm-house some miles short of Castle M. to give her some refreshment.

The pull up, cautiously as it was achieved, chased Ned's light slumbers also; and believing, naturally enough, that he had arrived at his destination, he gazed eagerly out at the rear (the only opening) of the crazy jingle in which he was pent up, for the waning lights of Castle M. It was with disappointment of course that his half-awakened eyes rested, instead of streets and houses, on a bit of black bog; but it was with absolute horror that he felt, blowing freshly on his exposed face, that very coveted breeze which, from his own position and that of the vehicle, he knew would be at this moment shaking out every topsail, and unfurling every "blue Peter" in the long wind-bound fleet!

"How long has it blown this way, boy?" screamed Ned, jumping half distracted out of the car.

"Sure just since the turn o' the night, your honour; it's rising wid the sun it is every minnet, and sorrow a ship there'll be in the Cove yander, by the time we get back to it."

The prognostic was but too likely to be realized. But for Ned to turn back with his conjugal anxieties unrelieved, within a few miles of their object, was beyond human, or even military nature. Two words sufficed to make the farmer, at whose door the car drew up, aware of the urgency of the case. A fleet nag was cheerfully saddled for the anxious husband, while boy and mare from Cove were amply refreshed to resume their journey on his return. In how little time he reached Castle M. it was well the farmer's horse could not inform his master; and well it was perhaps for poor Jane, that, sunk in the slumber which followed a long and difficult labour, she was unconscious alike of the kiss imprinted by Ned on her own pale lip, or on the paler cheek of his dead infant boy!

"She'll do well, thank God!" was all the kind old doctor could say; "that is, if you don't remain to disturb her when she wakes. But"—suddenly looking out at the old church steeple opposite, "be

off, and be d—d to you; don't you see the wind is blowing as fair as ever it can blow?"

"I know it," cried poor Ned, "I have known it too long. God bless you, doctor; lay my child in the grave, and be kind to *her*." One more look of agony, and he was gone!

Little passed during the tedious drive to Cove across the hills; the last of which displayed the spectacle, under other circumstances the most beautiful perhaps in the world, of a whole fleet under weigh, and gliding like snow-white swans between shores of unparalleled beauty to the long-barred ocean. Just as the car dashed with breathless speed down the steep stony street, the last and dullest sailers of the convoy were disappearing beyond the rocky portals of Erin's proudest harbour; and to Ned, who knew the transport containing his detachment to have been moored in one of the outermost berths it afforded, the thought of overtaking her seemed altogether hopeless. With Irishmen, however, once excited and interested, nothing is impossible; and while Ned, as in a dream, collected his few shore traps, his bow-legged friend Phil had a light pleasure wherry, (belonging to some absentee gentleman) manned by a stout and willing crew, as ready to take advantage of the breeze as the best sailing vessel in the convoy.

"We'll catch her yet, your honour," cried Phil, leaping in uninvited to the boat. Sail was set in an instant, the sharp tight little craft caught the breeze, and cut through the water with the rapidity of lightning.

"How did you come by the boat, my lad?" said Ned at length, when, his feelings somewhat soothed by rapid motion and quick progress, he found leisure to think less painfully of his situation. "O, uncle Phil's the charge of her like for Lord F. He's an ould sarvant of the family, and sure I told him when ye paid the mare so handsome, and yees in trouble, it would be a sin and shame not to get ye aboard before night."

Before night, however, it was not destined to be; no, nor for another and another night! The wind towards afternoon first died away, which, as retarding the larger vessels, would rather have favoured the gaining on them of the wherry. But ere long it chopped about foul; and while the transports, a good deal scattered, nevertheless by tacking held on a sort of course, the light, unballasted, ill-manned boat soon beat about helplessly at the mercy of the conflicting billows. Evening was setting in with every prospect of a rising storm; the exhausted crew had little or nothing in the shape of refreshment on board; to keep the sea was impossible, and all their object (Ned's feelings when obliged to acquiesce may be imagined) became to regain, if possible before night, the friendly shelter of Cove. It was accomplished with so much of danger and difficulty, such imminent hazard of shipwreck to the little borrowed vessel, and of death to her crew of kind-hearted volunteers, that dearly as Ned had on former occasions purchased the indulgence of his conjugal feelings, his present sufferings fairly threw into the shade even his late domestic misfortune.

With the morning light, however, Fortune, as she had before done,

cast on him one of her compassionating smiles. A swift-sailing cutter, with fresh orders, came round in quest of the convoy. To get on board her with a stout fishing-boat was easily, though of course not cheaply, (the whole frolic had been an expensive one,) attainable; and on the third day Ned Harris, lucky in a sympathising *married* commanding officer, stood dripping and dismayed on the deck of the transport vessel, Betsy.

From the time, however, that, after a short and prosperous passage, his foot touched, free and untrammelled, the shores of Spain, (for it was the memorable expedition to the Peninsula that he had thus perhaps ominously embarked on,) my poor schoolfellow, with whom the charms of war now once more united me, became as it were a new man. His innate military ardour, deprived till now of an adequate field, and repressed by petty domestic entanglements, burst forth in a devotion to the details of ordinary duty, which soon drew forth the favourable attention of his superiors; and when in the numerous affairs of a campaign, too romantic almost in its circumstances for modern warfare, opportunities for individual prowess presented themselves, no *preux chevalier* of old ever earned for himself, a more brilliant local reputation, than the fire-eating, dashing captain of his Majesty's — foot.

The regiment, chiefly recruited in Ireland, was as fond of fighting as its crack officer; and the knowledge of Irish character acquired by Ned during his residence in the country, and the community of feeling engendered by his having left his wife and child among them, enabled him not only to lead into danger, but to keep out of mischief, his thoughtless Patlanders, in a way which less good-natured men found difficult enough.

The knowledge that Jane was safe and well, and for a time even happy, (as happy as a fond wife separated from an indulgent husband can or ought to be,) seemed to remove the *incubus* which had for so long pressed down the spirits, the talents, and energies of Ned Harris: and when I saw him, daring and foremost in action—cool and decisive in success—and even when check or reverse occurred, so prompt and fertile in expedient, as to be resorted to like an oracle, by a commanding officer not usually over diffident—I asked myself, could this be the unlucky devil so often suspected of shirking, and whose whole life had been hitherto a series of “offending” against discipline, of which matrimony alone had constituted the “head and front?”

Poor Jane, I am sure, could she have witnessed either his exploits or their appreciation by others, had enough of the heroine in her to have approved and admired them. But it is one thing to follow, with blood up and spirits roused, in the wake of glorious victory—nay, even to wrestle, in undiminished vigour and manliness, with temporary hardship and reverse—and another to read imperfect, and garbled, and exaggerated accounts of distant protracted operations, in which peril must, ever to a wife, form the most prominent feature.

A hurried but affectionate letter from Ned, sanguine as his own buoyant spirit could make it, would now and then, it is true, cast its own bright glow over scenes in which his soul found at length a conge-

nial element ; and on this poor Jane would live, till first vague unauthenticated rumour, and then too stern reality, brought tidings of death and bereavement to hall and cottage in that green land of the brave, whose blood was so freely poured in the wars of our common country. The promotion to a majority, which so gratified the military feeling of the one and improved the circumstances of the other, was saddened to both, by being the consequence of casualty among comrades long known and familiarly loved ; and if, amid all the excitement of quickly-following victories, fear for a precious life was the paramount sensation—latterly, when beneath the overwhelming importance of mightier strife the contest seemed to languish, it was little less painfully exchanged for “hope,” from day to day “deferred.”

Hitherto, in the absence of her husband, the chief object of course both of love and enjoyment to Jane's affectionate heart had been her only daughter ; a child who, in mind and character, had fully realized the presentiments of hope and promise with which, as a pledge of reconciliation as well as of mutual love, she had at first been welcomed into the world. The counterpart of her gentle mother in elegance of appearance and sweetness of disposition, there slept beneath this mild exterior a large share of her father's latent energy. She grew up a true soldier's daughter, and when old enough to enter into and trace his campaigning operations, no guerilla maiden in Spain knew better (as far at least as it could be known on a map) the “local habitation,” as well as “name,” of the scene of every successful skirmish. Her mother, while she sometimes smiled at, and sometimes sighed over, her daughter's chivalrous feeling, insensibly caught a portion of its ardour, and had the fond sanguine spirit of youth still continued to sustain the misgivings of a weaker and less confiding temperament, Ned might perhaps have returned a proud and joyous father and husband to his long-deserted hearth.

But the ways of Heaven are inscrutable ; never perhaps more so to shortsighted mortals, than when some bright blossom, just expanding into loveliness to cheer and gladden a father's decline, is smitten with that fell blight which seldom descends alone, or fails to lodge its deadly canker in the parent stem. At twelve, the not uncommon Irish name of “Cherry” (with which, in dutiful remembrance of her alienated grandmother, Jane in the far East had endowed her first-born daughter) seemed the most appropriate that love's vocabulary could have afforded for the rosy dimpled creature, all life and freshness, who gamboled by her now pale mother's side. Two short years later, the deeper wanness of that mother's brow would have been the hue of health compared to the death-bloom which strove with a yet still ghastlier white on the flushed cheek of her tall, fragile, fatally-developed child. As long as hope remained,—and where, save at the last, did it desert a mother's inmost heart ?—Jane shrank from haunting with her own too gloomy presages her husband's lonely tent or midnight watch ; and when the dread worst came to crush her own worn spirit, she had no words in which to clothe tidings so overwhelming to a doting father's ears.

The kind old doctor, who might have assumed the painful office, and by his prudent counsels soothed and dissuaded a despairing mo-

ther from a hazardous step, had long since fallen a sacrifice to gratuitous labours among a fever-stricken peasantry. So there was none among pitying neighbours or sympathizing acquaintances who could do more than drop a tear with a broken-hearted mother over her darling's early grave; or venture to remonstrate, when, in the first sense of utter desolation, she determined to embark in one of the many Cork vessels daily employed in conveying stores and provisions to our blockading army off Bayonne, to seek and impart, by throwing herself on the bosom of her natural protector, that only solace of which their mutual affliction now admitted.

And in this resolution, wild and desperate as it seemed, there mingled more than the mere hope of relief from unshared mental suffering. The "insatiate archer's" arrow had glanced to the mother from her child, and Jane felt now or never she must embrace her long-absent husband. If life or health were ever to be recruited for his sake, the milder climate of Spain held out, perhaps, the sole faint chance. So with a last long kiss to the turf, which no gentle air of spring had yet taught to grow green above her buried treasure, Jane sailed from Cove in a stout brig, owned by the brother of her husband's serjeant-major, one of those kind, warm-hearted, humble friends so often to be met with in Ireland. Almost seven years had passed since, harassed with fatigue, stunned with domestic misfortune, and haunted with dread of professional disgrace, Ned Harris had quitted the same enchanting spot, which then, in all its flush of human beauty, had as little power to charm as now, when, in the delusive loveliness of a summer-like March afternoon, it wooed in vain a parting glance of admiration from a bereaved mother's eye.

The voyage, at a boisterous season, had of course its share of evils; at least it must have been so, for alas! no record of them saw the light. Many (if indeed the survivors of that fast-fading period may be now so numbered) among the brave men who in 18— sought to beguile the tedium of the lingering blockade of Bayonne by rambles in its picturesque vicinity will yet remember—(others owe to the graphic fidelity of a narrative, familiar as it ought to be to every Briton)—the harrowing sensations excited in the bosom of spectators from a distant height, whence, alas! no shadow of assistance could be even attempted, by the inevitable destruction of a fine but unknown vessel, drifted by the relentless fury of a sudden gale on the reef of rocks extending from the little Spanish seaport town of B.

In the sight of anxious, but from the first almost hopeless groups, the gallant brig was shivered to atoms—all her supposed British crew engulfed to rise no more; while one corse, one alone, that of a genteel, elegantly-formed female, but a little past the prime of life, was borne ashore by the relenting waves to receive such hasty sepulture as soldiers, in presence of an enemy, even amid the breathings of a hollow half-acknowledged armed neutrality, could give. An abler pen than mine has told how long and deeply the horrors of the shipwreck thus witnessed haunted the lonely outpost in silent bivouac; and how men, long inured to carnage in the field, and reckless of death amid war's stirring scenes, felt visions of drowning men, engulfed

beneath mountain billows, press round their midnight pillow with all the frightful vividness of Clarence's harrowing dream !

Some six weeks might have elapsed after this "sorry sight," when letters of eager inquiry about his family from poor Harris were ominously *returned* to him by the rector of Castle M., with the appalling intelligence of his wife having sailed for Spain in the hitherto unaccounted for brig "Erin." Poor Ned scarcely comprehended, as he read, that he was a childless father, and his sunny darling (still in his mind's eye a prattler at his knee) a prematurely expanded, and now blighted and withered flower. But instinct, the unerring instinct of despair, taught him at once that the poor buried victim of shipwreck could be no other than his broken-hearted Jane. A ring, where his dark hair was now blended with a little tress of that rich gold in which death's seal is often early set, confirmed this strong conviction, and all that now remained for the sad deeply pitied widower was the solace of a day of unrestrained solitary weeping over the "stranger's grave."

Nor could this "luxury of woe" have been, at any period during the long eventful campaign, so safely and unhesitatingly allowed himself by one whom all that lengthened struggle had never for a moment found absent from the post of duty. Aware, from authentic though as yet unofficial sources, of the occupation of Paris by the allies, and the virtual termination of the war, the British forces, it is well known, dreamt little of an engagement, all the superfluous carnage of which must rest with the sullen incredulity of a proud and baffled foe.

That the blockading army was surprised, in almost the security of peace, by a movement, as unforeseen as it was overwhelming, of a trebly superior force, is now matter of history. But by few, perhaps, is it known, or at least remembered, that when the regiment almost in advance of the attacked position was first aroused to a sense of danger, its temporary commander, the second field officer, was, for the first time in his life, not there, to direct with his wonted energy the necessary measures of resistance, and cheer on with his well-known voice the troops to whom it would have been a rallying point.

All that valour and habits of discipline, however, could do, was achieved by the next in command ; and when, roused by the roar of perhaps the heaviest fire of the campaign, from the grave whence aught else might have proved insufficient to tear him, Ned Harris rode wildly and desperately into the thickest of the *melée*, it was but to share the fate of a soldier of higher military renown, and be borne a wounded prisoner within the walls of a place, of which a few days more would have given his countrymen bloodless possession.

His wounds, though severe, were not deemed fatal ; but it was sad for the gallant and martial spirit which had so truly borne, during the long eventful conflict, the "burden and heat of the day," to be laid, at its victorious close, on the pallet of an enemy's hospital, a prey to mingled sentiments of private sorrow and professional remorse, which little needed the pangs of bodily suffering to lend their additional sharpness. Amid the excitement of the advance upon Paris, and the proud consciousness of a well-earned share in its triumph, the feelings of the soldier might, in some degree, have absorbed those of the father

and husband; but, in the joyless solitude of sickness and sorrow, the gorgeous paraphernalia of victory amid which his comrades revelled came to him with all the indistinctness of a feverish dream, while the sad reality that he was alone, not only in Bayonne, but in the world, was there with its every-day bitterness.

Fever, perhaps happily, ensued after brief amendment; and on the day when his portion of the army, at length released from long and superfluous "observation," followed in the track of earlier victors into Paris, it was my lot (having been detained myself by a trifling wound) to lay the companion of my school-days beside the wife from whom he had been in death "not long divided," in a spot hallowed by affection, if not by Romish bigotry, outside the quiet cemetery of the little Spanish village of B——.

WHO LOVES THE GIFTED?

BY MRS. ABDY.

Who loves the gifted? Enthroned and bright,
They pass through life in a track of light,
In the fairy realms of thought they dwell,
And oft by a sudden and mighty spell
They force proud spirits to own their sway,
Listen in awe, and in fear obey;
They rule the mind by their mystic art,
But they hold no place in the secret heart.

Who loves the gifted?—Extolled by all,
They are bid to the gay and gilded hall,
At their entrance every pulse beats high,
And welcome sparkles in every eye:
They speak—and applauses long and loud,
Tell of the joy of the ardent crowd,
Yet are there none who that joy express
In the soft low tones of tenderness.

Who loves the gifted?—Fond youths and maids
Con their sweet lays in the flowery glades,
Hearing the murmur of silvery streams,
And watching the sun's departing beams;
They think of the high and laurelled one,
As they deem of the warm and glorious sun,
Craving no intercourse, free and near,
With the tenants bright of a distant sphere.

Who Loves the Gifted?

Who loves the gifted?—Their kindred claim
A share in the honours of their name,
And the glory glads their eager sight,
That gives them back its reflected light;
They greet their presence in triumph proud,
When their home is filled with a gazing crowd;
But the quiet and lowly ones of the earth
They hold more dear by the peaceful hearth.

None love the gifted!—They sink in death,
And a nation twines their cypress wreath,
And gives them a monody of gloom,
And a funeral train, and a marble tomb;
Mournful repinings are sighed around,
Yet none in the still, dark night are found
To that tomb in silence to repair,
And fondly scatter fair flowerets there.

None love the gifted! Love cannot rest
In the laurel bower as a willing guest;
He flies in the primrose vale to dwell—
O, why do the gifted love so well?
Might they not smile, through their brief bright days,
In the envied sunshine of human praise?
Why do they picture soft loving eyes,
Why do they sorrow for home's sweet ties?

None love the gifted!—O! teach them, Heaven,
That to thee alone should their faith be given.
Let the wounded heart become resigned;
Sustain and strengthen the wearied mind
To bear the destiny, cold and drear,
That must ever wait on Genius here;
From their earthly idols set them free,—
Let their love, O Lord, be all for thee!

MEMORIES OF GIBRALTAR.

No. VI.¹

OUR Apician rites being concluded, in which, to say the truth, most of the worshippers displayed a devotion and zeal perfectly edifying, and none more than the inspired bard, we began to consider the next movement for rendering the time pleasant, but we soon found that our anxieties upon that head had been obligingly anticipated by the kind assiduity of the women of the ferry-house, who favoured us with an impromptu drama, expressly got up for the occasion at their own particular desire, and forth upon the scene rushed a group of seemingly crazed bacchantes, tearing their hair and beating their bosoms, and declaring that a quantity of household gods in the shape of ear-drops, rings, gold chains, and holy relics, appertaining to their holiday attire, had been stolen: whether they meant to insinuate that they had been appropriated by our party or our attendants, we were not able to learn, but amongst us they broadly asserted that the theft had been committed—an assertion which was so indignantly repelled by every individual, that we all insisted upon being examined; this was not exactly what the Spaniards wanted, but after sundry evasions, and amidst bitter wailings, being forced to supervise where they had reason to know that no goods of theirs were to be found, we ladies adjourned to a chamber in the house, while the gentlemen and our boat's crew accompanied the two ferrymen into an adjoining shed to prosecute the respective researches.

After an unavailing scrutiny which consumed nearly a couple of hours, and the whole of our good humour, we conceived ourselves at liberty to depart, but no; in vain we argued that, as the jewels were not found, it followed that we had not proof that they had ever been lost. They rebutted our *sequitur* by the conclusive argument, that proof or no proof, we should pay; money they wanted, and money they would have; but as our numbers were formidable, this determination could only be indicated in the most pacific manner. We were consequently spared the delights of an affray, and giving them an invitation to visit the Rock to lay their grievance before his Excellency, who would see justice done to all parties, we departed, our beaux having saved, by this ingenious device of the peasants, at least one-half of the gratuity which they intended to have bestowed—so often does avarice overreach its own cunning.

It is almost needless to add, that our persecutors never thought proper to visit Gibraltar for the purpose of substantiating their charge; and we afterwards learned that the trick was very frequently and generally successfully played when the party happened to be small.

The sun was still high in the heavens when we left the ferry, and as it seemed far too early to steer for the Rock, it was proposed that we should pass some time in exploring the navigation of the second

¹ Continued from vol. xxxi. p. 448.

river, which having entered, the deeply-laden barge was soon left far astern, unable to make her course in the shallow water, while our lighter bark floated on, on, until at last we reached a spot which the fair Clarissa declared to be a perfect love, and which we all thought so inviting that we determined, *nem. con.*, to land in search of rural adventures.

"If we could only see some cows and milkmaids," we said, "we might fancy ourselves at home in merry England; and what a treat would be a draught of warm new milk!"

But not a cow, nor even the *sign* of a cow, was to be seen; still it was impossible that such pastures should not be tenanted by cattle, so cows and milkmaids we were determined to find, and on we trudged, over fields, over dike, until the river was left far behind, but still we were destined to disappointment. At last the wisdom of a retrograde movement began to dawn upon our minds, so we gave the word "to the right about face!" but every one knows that it is no easy matter to tread back the steps of folly; so instead of accomplishing our undertaking with the same facility that we had wandered forth into unknown ways, the sun had set, and night was rapidly closing in before we reached the river's bank, and, lo! there, high and dry, "quiet and aisy, never saying nothing to nobody," as Paddy says, lay the cutter, comfortably resting upon her larboard-side. As for the river, that had gone to pay its evening respects to the ocean, and as it was equally impossible to bring the water to the boat, or the boat to the water, we had a pleasant night's prospect before us, by way of finale to our delightful day's pleasure. We had come here to seek for adventures, and adventures we were likely to have to our heart's content, especially as the wind began to howl among the trees, and a flock of shrieking sea-gulls gave portentous warning of a coming storm.

What was to be done now?

The question was still unanswered, when a vivid flash dazzled our eyes, and a loud clap of thunder pealed upon our ears. To remain with the boat was impossible, to shelter beneath the trees was too dangerous, and not even a hut was in sight. If we separated, our danger would be increased. Banditti, stilettos, and all the wild and romantic tales of the country, recurred to our memory; even the gentlemen began to share our apprehensions, as we perceived by the haste with which they hurried us into the open space, and then held a whispered council together.

Military men are accustomed to prompt decisions, so it was soon intimated that they had resolved to leave the cutter to her fate, and devote all their energies to seeking some shelter, where at least we should be secure from the "pitiless pelting of the storm," which was now falling upon us in torrents, drenching our slight dresses, and battering our simply veiled heads in the most impolite and more-free-than-welcome manner imaginable.

As I had been well drilled into subordination about the same time that I had learned my A B C, and as my protégée was quite willing to trust her safety to the valour of the lieutenant, we lost no further

time than was necessary to secure the boat from drifting on the return of the tide before we set out on our perilous undertaking.

The captain led the way, the major and I followed, and the Iberian shepherd, with his *Nectarian tart*, brought up the rear, and so we groped on, for night had fallen in good earnest, and the rain was swept heavily into our faces by every gust that came. Chilled, dripping, and dishevelled, we clung to our conductors as each flash glared upon us, and as the eddies threatened to whisk us away into still more doubtful regions, offering little reply to their whispered encouragements, or to the captain's louder exclamations a hundred times reiterated, "There, don't be alarmed, that is the last, it is the tail of the squall"—a saying that afterwards became a by-word in the garrison, for, despite of the captain's assurance the squall proved to have as many tails as the Medusa's head.

At last, just as we were about to declare our inability to proceed farther, we discovered a light apparently at some distance; at first it was so indistinct that we dare scarcely believe it real, but as we approached, it became brighter and brighter, until at last we found ourselves close to an old straggling building, whence loud voices issued; and now it became a matter of demur whether it were safe to announce ourselves, and whether, with so small a number, the gentlemen would be able to defend us against those who might possibly be within, and who seemed already in deep altercation.

An exterior examination of the premises showed us the building either had been, or still was, a water-mill, which indicated the peaceful occupation of the inhabitants, yet that was not a circumstance to be relied upon too rashly. Our guardians, however, were each armed with pistols and their regimental swords—a precautionary measure then in general use among the military on excursions in Spain, several incidents having exhibited the necessity of such a wholesome check to the superabundant civilities of our *grateful* neighbours. Therefore, trusting in these and in the firmness of their own measures in case of danger, our arrival was at length made known by knocking at the door, accompanied by a civil request for admittance. In an instant the contention ceased, and all was silent.

"Knock again," said the captain.

The major obeyed.

There was a shuffling of feet, and then the question in a woman's voice, "Who is there?"

"English officers."

A whisper followed, footsteps were heard retreating, and then a man's voice gruffly demanded, "Your business?"

"Shelter, signor. It is a rough night."

"All we have is at your disposal," replied a woman in the accustomed phrase of the country, though the stranger who expects to derive any advantage from so courteous a profession will be most miserably disappointed; for although every request you make, and every article you admire, is always thus placed at your command, yet nothing is more distant from the intention of the Spaniard than that you should take advantage of his politeness.

Therefore, well knowing the value of the intimation, the captain

instantly replied in that way which he judged best calculated to give a meaning to its nothingness.

"We will liberally reward your hospitality,"—an assurance to which no people are more open than Spaniards.

"The signor is bountiful," said the woman, and again we caught the shuffling of feet.

"Haste, haste! open the door—we have ladies here."

"We cannot open—there is no room."

"Did you not offer us accommodation?"

"Yes, signor; but we have not any—there is a vineyard farther on."

"How far?"

"Three miles."

"Pshaw! You must give us shelter."

No answer.

"You must," said the major blustering, "we have sailors at the river, and if you refuse, we'll batter your old walls about your ears."

There was a pause, a shuffle, and then the door was thrown open by the woman.

"Enter, signor—we have nothing, no beds, no food—but enter!"

"You have a good fire at least," said the captain, "and if you will find any sort of couch for the ladies, we will be content."

"There are sacks of corn," said the woman shortly; "they can rest there;" and as she spoke she pointed to an obscure corner.

An excellent wood fire was burning most invitingly on the hearth, around which we gladly grouped, not however without casting some suspicious glances around the large and dimly-lighted chamber, into which we had been so ungraciously admitted.

The woman, and an apparently half-witted youth, seemed the only occupants, but amongst the machinery of the mill, and the sacks, and husbandry that lay heaped together, it would have been very easy to conceal several persons; and as we had distinctly overheard many contending voices, we could not doubt that a formidable number, supposing their intentions to be hostile, were still lurking on the premises; and the very fact of their disappearance rendered their disposition towards us questionable, to which the determined refusal of the hostess to provide even a cup of milk or a loaf of bread for our refreshment, added still more suspicious testimony.

Here was a dilemma. As a celebrated authoress would say, "The poet looked funereal stanzas at Clarissa, and Clarissa looked elegies at the poet, whilst we all looked *Odically* enough at each other; for, in despite of Byron and his imitators, we were all so hungry that even that abused vulgarism, bread and butter, would not have been rejected either by the ethereal Clarissa or her tumbling lover.

Finding, however, that neither bribes nor entreaties could extract either civility or assistance, and that our gruff hostess would not permit us to repose elsewhere than as she had curtly indicated, we were forced to submit to her decree, and proceeded to dry our streaming garments in the best manner we could, whilst the gentlemen commenced a most ostentatious examination of their pistols—a process intended for the special edification of our landlady, who having locked

and barred the entrances, and secured the key, most unceremoniously deposited herself in the hopper of the mill, and continued looking down upon us with truly feline vigilance.

Meanwhile, having completed the arrangement of our disordered dresses, and bound up our dishevelled locks into something like arrangement, for a woman's first anxiety is commonly her appearance, we began to indulge in a little galvanic mirth at the grotesque exhibition which we made, and the unexpected conclusion of our day's pleasure. By this ebullition we hoped to show our perfect self-possession and ease, but a more wretched attempt at gaiety never was exhibited; it reminded me of the power attributed to Garrick of uniting both tragedy and comedy in his face at the same moment. As for the lieutenant, he cachinnated most tragically, and brought the tears in our eyes by his ponderous exertions to be merry.

Finding that a couple of hours had elapsed without any interruption being offered to us, we drew our seats closer, and conversed more rationally, and even ventured to consult upon the probability of our safety in the event of resigning ourselves to the influence of a certain midnight visitor, who began most unpolitely to entertain himself by putting his leaden fingers on our eyelids, or, as our bard Sylvester, in his usual happy strain, expressed it,

“Dull Morpheus spreads his wings before our sight,
And perches softly on our orbs of light.”

After many pros and cons, it was decided that whilst the ladies reclined upon the corn-sacks, so uncourteously appropriated to our use, the gentlemen should remain at their posts, watching and sleeping by turns.

Before permitted, however, to occupy our agrarian couches, they proceeded upon a minute examination, and would probably have extended their researches more satisfactorily, had they not been stopped by the woman, who, suddenly starting up, commanded them to desist—an order which under the circumstances they did not deem it wise to dispute. Having seen enough to be assured that the vicinity of our resting-place was not approachable without the observation of our guard, we retired, and the fair Clarissa had soon forgotten her alarms, and even, I do believe, the exquisite composition of her delectable adorer. Sleep, however, was more faithless to me, for scarcely had I reclined before he spread the balmy pinions that he had been waving so somniferously over me, and flew quite away, plumping all at once upon the cranium of the poet, who was soon elevated, I suppose, to a place among the gods, and whose nasal organ quickly favoured us with a bassoon obligato that would not have disgraced Baumann himself.

As my sight became accustomed to the chiara oscura of my position, I could plainly distinguish the farthest extremity of the chamber, and perceive likewise that the glittering eyes of the woman were still open, and I fancied that I saw a smile gleam across her countenance as first the lieutenant and then the captain sank to repose. The major still watched, and I observed that from time to time she raised her hand as indicating silence to some unseen person, still keeping her gaze fixed, or, for a single instant, sending down a prying glance

towards us—a scrutiny which, it is scarcely necessary to add, I found means to baffle.

The boy was coiled up into a ball at her feet—it could not, therefore, be for him that her gesture was intended. If not for him, for whom then? Could I be mistaken?—no! There was a rustling, and again the hand rose impatiently, just as the click of the major's pistol gave notice that his ear had caught the sound, and that he was prepared to act on the defensive. Again all was silence; but as I looked in the direction whence the sound proceeded, I caught a hasty glimpse of some indistinct object suddenly withdrawn.

An hour waned heavily and silently, the embers began to flicker and fall down, the lamp grew dim, and the major seemed to nod; still I continued watchful,—and now a new sign was given. The woman rose gently, very gently, and from her lofty position leisurely surveyed all our party,—then, satisfied, as it appeared, with the result of her investigations, she turned herself round and nodded; and immediately up rose a head from among the machinery, and, gliding noiselessly along near the wall, disappeared through an open doorway, which I now first observed. Another and another followed, and highly excited, I was deliberating whether I should arouse the gentlemen by that truly feminine device, a most orthodox shriek, or remain a quiet observer of their movements, when, with the stealthy activity of a cat, down dropped the woman, and disappeared after the rest. At the same moment my wrist was grasped, and a dark shaggy head was bent down into my face.

“Senora!”

I gasped, and made an effort to escape, but a strong hand forcibly detained me. I fixed my eyes strainingly on the swarthy and stolid countenance—it was that of the idiot boy—but it was lighted with a wild and eager gleam, as with the energetic action of his country, and in his own language, with which I was then familiar, he said, “Sleep not!—he is here!—but they are many—they will have blood!—blood! Your life depends on silence. They are above—without. Do not interfere! Leave not the house! You die if you go forth! Silence!—silence!”

As he uttered the last word, a whistle was heard without, answered overhead, and the next instant the boy, who clambered like a monkey, was again in his position, coiled up into the semblance of complete insensibility, while I, overcome with terror, and in defiance of the injunction received, was standing beside our nodding sentinel, dropping at breathless intervals the unintelligible warning into his still somnolent ear; but as I extended my hand to arouse the captain, he quickly drew me back, while in a loud voice he answered,

“Certainly, certainly, sit where you please, but mice are quite harmless.”

I turned, believing that he still dreamt, and was about to utter a peevish reply, when I beheld our watchful hostess within two paces' distance, attentively regarding me, and instantly taking the hint, I affected to be busily occupied in arranging my position.

“What has disturbed you, senora?” inquired she.

“The mice,” answered the major—“this old mill is full of them, I doubt not.”

"There is nothing in the mill worse than yourself," gruffly rejoined the hostess, "and I should recommend the senora to sleep."

"The senora will do as she likes best," interposed the major.

"As you please," rejoined the woman, turning once more to her lair; but before she sprang into it she paused, and fixing a long look on me, added—"There is no one in the mill except the boy and myself—you have nothing to fear *here*!"

There was something ambiguous in the phrase. It might be that the rest had now departed, and that we really had nothing to fear so long as we continued within the mill; perhaps they had sent out scouts to inform their friends of the cork-wood of our movements, and meant to waylay us on the morrow; so that if we were traced to this lonely habitation, our departure thence might be proved, so that their connexion with our fate might remain undiscovered. Yet why should they attack us at all? Military men are proverbially not rich, and it could not be supposed that we had any valuable property with us;—in point of fact, excepting the boat which was lying on the river unguarded, we had nothing there that could provoke their cupidity, or seem worth the chances of an encounter; and as, after all, men do not commit murder by way of pastime, the major had contrived to reason me out of my alarms, and had just prevailed with me to think of retiring, when a heavy lumbering noise overhead startled us all, and interrupted the lieutenant's musical exertions.

"What is that?" inquired the captain.

"So Phaeton fell, and set the world on fire!" exclaimed the descendant from the celestial regions.

No one replied, so the poet glared his gooseberry eyes over to where his love lay sleeping, and seemed about to resign himself again to the drowsy god, when the captain's question as to the cause of my wakefulness, concisely answered by a strong recommendation to follow my example, effectually aroused the energies of both. And thus we sat watching;—sometimes remaining, with half-closed eyes, silent and motionless for several minutes, and then uttering a few murmured words, scarcely to be heard above a breath.

The storm had now died away, and the pattering of the rain had ceased. All was still as death, and all appeared to sleep, when a man's step was heard stealthily approaching. The slight rustle of his clothes faintly indicated his course as he crept past the sacks. The woman was looking earnestly down upon him. I ventured to glance toward the gentlemen. They sat like statues, but evidently with every nerve braced in readiness for action. Each held one hand folded within the breast of his coat, the other grasping the hilt of his sword. To move would have been to have given the signal for an affray; so I pressed my lips together, held in my breath, and remained silent as themselves.

The man now advanced into the light: he held his large clasp-knife open in his hand. He looked up at the woman—she waved her hand, and he quickened his movements. Then she pointed to the lamp, and as he approached it my heart beat quicker—for, to be in an enemy's stronghold was bad enough, but to be in darkness with him was still more alarming.

He took down the lamp, and as he did so his hand shook. He snuffed it once—still it burned; again—no, it was not out—it burned brighter—he had only adjusted it; then cautiously holding it above his head, with the knife gleaming and shortened in his grasp, he advanced towards us, and, commencing with the major, he slowly yet carefully examined his features, his person, and his appointments. Next to him sat the lieutenant; him he subjected to a similar process; and then he turned to the captain, upon whom a like scrutiny was in the course of operation, when, I know not by what singular impulse prompted, up started I from the corner, where it appeared I had sat unperceived, my white dress falling in ample folds about my person, my long white veil half shrouding my face, and, gliding before the man, presented to him an appearance so spectral and ghastly, that down fell the lamp from his palsied hand, and down on his knees dropped he, pattering his heels as fast as his chattering teeth would let him.

“Caitiff!” exclaimed the captain, while the major secured the lamp, and the lieutenant rushed to the side of his divinity.

“Mercy! mercy! signor capitaine.”

“Wretch, would you murder us?”

“No, senor, no. I only wanted to see if you are enemies or friends—I only wanted to defend myself.”

“Ungrateful varlet! Have we not always proved ourselves the friends of Spain? Who have been your defenders, but Englishmen?—and this is your return. You are all alike!”

“No, senor, I would not hurt you; you have often given me a dollar; I am grateful—I know you, signor capitaine.”

“And I know you now, Mr. Sentinel,” replied the captain. “You are the scoundrel who shot the young merchant yesterday—but you shall answer for his life with your own.”

“Another word like that,” thundered a hoarse voice, which we instantly recognized to be the same that we had heard before our entrance—“another word like that, and you die!” and at the same instant a group of men, armed with carbines, poured into the room.

“Nay, put up your pistols, senors; you see we too can play at that game. Be silent, and you are safe; but if only one signal escape you—”

“We have men and arms,” began the major, in a blustering tone.

“You told us so last night, for which we have thought fit to prevent your communicating with them by holding you prisoners,” said the man calmly.

“Our party,” began the captain—

“Rest you, rest you,” interposed the Spaniard, while he carefully covered the retreat of the trembling criminal—“as for your party, when their boat was last seen, it was drifting before the storm, and is either carried out to sea by this time, or gone to the bottom.”

A loud whistle close to the window was now responded to by one of the group, while the woman hastily left the room.

“That scout,” pursued the man, “announces that no men of yours have been found in our neighbourhood; it is now day; you shall soon, therefore, be at liberty to depart, but not yet. Obey my instructions,

and no molestation will be offered to you; disobey them, and"—he pointed to his men, the sight of whose ferocious countenances was quite sufficient to enforce compliance with the proposed terms.

Making, therefore, a virtue of necessity, the gentlemen testified their submission by a most courteous bow, and the host immediately advanced to the door, and, removing the bolts and bars, flung it wide open.

It was broad day; the sun was just risen, and never were his beams more welcome. It seemed as if with one smile he had dissipated all our dangers;—and willingly would we have gone forth at once, but, as we approached the threshold,

"Not yet, senora," said the Spaniard, courteously doffing his cap; "you shall have such breakfast as we can give you—new milk, bread, and a few grapes. These you may partake, while we escort our brother to a place of safety. He was unfortunate yesterday, for he did not intend to hurt the young man; and you should not have wanted a welcome, had we not believed that you came hither in search of him—and it was natural that, on such an errand, we should endeavour to make you as uncomfortable as possible."

"Grazia," said I, dropping him a profound curtsy.

"You shall be more honourably entertained next time, senora."

"A safe assurance, good friend. Let us go this time, and I promise—"

"Promise not to stir from this chamber for one hour, and then to take the path I shall direct you until you come to Algeziras."

"To Algeziras! Impossible! We cannot walk so far—the tempest is scarcely over—the clouds are still threatening—"

"I will engage that you shall be well entertained at the vineyards which you will pass"

"But our boat—why not go in that?"

"The sea is still too rough."

"We are good sailors."

"It does not suit me. On the second day from this you shall find your boat, and all that it contains, lying off the pier-head at Algeziras."

While this short dialogue was going on, the men had retired as silently as they had approached; and when we turned our regards within, we perceived that our hostess was now bustling for our accommodation with the greatest alacrity. The hearth was already cleanly swept, the table spread, and, before we could think it possible, she had procured for us a huge jug of fresh milk, warm from the cow, bread white as a curd, and of a most peculiar delicacy of flavour, owing to the admixture of chestnut flour with that of the wheat, and a basket of grapes, blushing at their own beauty. It was a banquet fit for the gods, and we were in the act of arranging ourselves to do it all possible justice, when the host returned, booted and spurred, followed by his troop and the sentinel, and courteously requested to know if he could do anything to oblige us. His further civility being negatived, and a handsome recompense as tenaciously by him refused, he and his party departed, not, however, without leaving a guard at the door.

"In an hour," said he, "the ladies have permission to examine our old house, but for that time they will be best employed at their refreshment."

We thought so too; and now, completely at our ease, we fell into so merry a conversation, that considerably more than the allotted period had elapsed before we arose to take advantage of the permission granted.

At last we set about the gratification of our curiosity, and ascended a broad flight of stone stairs, when we found ourselves in a spacious suite of chambers, garnished with numerous couches of a coarse and homely description; proving that, had the will not been wanting, our hosts possessed ample means for our accommodation.

We were not, however, disposed to linger longer than was necessary; therefore, after a very hasty survey, in which we took care not to trouble our hostess with any impertinent questions respecting the late occupants of these chambers, we forced a donation upon the idiot boy, and departed, leaving the woman curtseying to the ground, and the eyes of the boy glistening through tears, as he threw up his cap and capered a farewell.

Our way lay through clover and rose fields, loaded with flowers, and breathing gales of perfume; and but for the white clouds that still chased each other, portending a renewal of the storm, nothing could have been more charming than our walk. Apprehensive, then, of being again drenched, we hastened onwards with as much speed as our admiration of the pastoral scenery around us would permit; but every object was so strongly in contrast to the bleakness of the rock, and recalled to all so forcibly the memories of England—though to me those were but infantine memories indeed—that our progress met with many interruptions.

We stopped at a vineyard to which we had been directed, where a pretty girl gathered grapes for us while we rested, and loaded us with the choicest flowers of her garden, and it was nearly mid-day before we passed the burial-ground exterior to the town of Algeziras. When there, all our anxieties began to awaken respecting the safety of the rest of our party; but we trusted that they had neared Gibraltar before the gale came on, and so had been protected from its violence by the shelter of the harbour. But how great was our astonishment, on passing the quay, to perceive the barge struggling over the foaming breakers, as slowly and dangerously she approached the pier-head, while the exhausted men and officers laboured with their united strength, and the belles, that but yesterday had looked so gay and blooming, were now clustered together in a pallid group, whose terror-stricken and haggard looks awoke no feeling but commiseration.

A shout of joy broke from the lips of one and all, as they beheld us hurrying to the pier-head; and as if a sudden conviction of safety had sprung up from the presence of friends, they renewed their efforts with increased vigour.

"If you attempt to land you are lost," shouted an old boatman, who stood earnestly watching their progress.

A dissenting wave of the hand from the commander spoke his determination, but the compression of his lips and his bent brows betrayed his apprehensions.

"If she grounds side on, you will be swamped by the breakers," roared the boatman; "all the men here cannot save you if you run alongside."

While he was yet speaking, a heavy sea came careering like a huge monster towards them.

"Hold her off!" shouted the commander.

The boat veered a point, and was borne back, and the next moment the wave swept over them.

"They are lost!" we gasped. But the devoted crew were firm, and the women, though drenched and breathless, still clung together, uttering not a single murmur that could distract the attention of those upon whose exertions their lives depended.

"Stand clear!" shouted the captain, assuming from his nautical experience the direction of the Spaniards who crowded the beach, and who now ranged themselves in readiness for action.

"Keep her head on!" he roared to the boat.

He was obeyed.

Another breaker swept over them—it brought her nearer—and now the slightest delay or mistake would be certain destruction.

"Clear the rope, and be ready!" exclaimed the captain.

The crew rose simultaneously to their oars; the commander was pale as death, but he stood like a piece of granite. The rope was ready, and twenty sinewy boatmen crouched over the pier like sea-dogs, watching for the retreating wave. It welled back with a roar, as if preparing for a terrific catastrophe, but, as it withdrew, the rope was flung, and caught with unerring precision, and head on she came plunging towards the pier. The next instant, a violent concussion jerked every one forward—the boat had grounded, and the gigantic breaker was again approaching.

"Now!" roared the commander, and without a pause each man seized the woman nearest to him, and plunged with her at once into the sea—and before the wave broke, all stood with their half-senseless burdens high and safe upon the beach; while the boat, so suddenly abandoned, was lifted up, and then thrown keel upwards upon the sands, thus affording them a practical illustration of the fate they had so narrowly escaped.

Our poor friends having been tenderly conveyed to the nearest hotel, and the whole party recruited by several hours' repose, we all assembled at the dinner-table with smiling faces, though, to own the truth, it was difficult to recognize individuals in the curious and incongruous disguises which necessity had provided for them.

They had been tossed about the bay, at the mercy of the gale, during the entire night, their utmost efforts being insufficient to accomplish more than to keep the boat from being either carried out into the channel or dashed upon the lee shore; consequently, their despair, and subsequent gratitude to Heaven for the preservation of their lives, had produced, for the time present, a total abnegation of personal affectations; and although a more ludicrous assemblage never congregated together, such a buoyant and cheerful spirit pervaded the company, that the day which had broken upon us all under such perilous auspices, closed upon us in a scene of mirth and heartfelt en-

joyment, such as is but rarely accorded to the sons and daughters of pleasure, who are but too often obliged to avow with Goldsmith, that

“Even while fashion’s brightest pleasures cloy,
The heart distrusting asks if this be joy.”

The gale, which had been so fortunately suspended, returned before nightfall with such increased violence, and continued so long, that during three days we were held in durance at our hotel, unable to communicate, even over land, with the garrison—a circumstance very embarrassing to the gentlemen, it being contrary to the governor’s orders for any officer to be absent for a night from the Rock without leave.

Visions of reprimands, arrests, and courts of inquiry, therefore, flitted before them in very disagreeable perspective. Yet, upon the whole, those three days deserved to be marked in letters of gold on the book of life; for even the minor miseries, which at any other period would have been voted calamities, became subjects for amusement.

To complete the happiness of our naval commander, the two men reported missing reappeared during the evening of the second day. They had, it proved, only strayed into the town upon a frolic, with the intention of returning immediately; but the wine had proved too fascinating, and when they awoke to recollection the boat was gone. Their pardon being interceded for by the ladies in full council, they suffered no worse punishment than a rebuke, and thus the cloud was banished from the brows of their officer.

On the third morning the gale abated, and we had just despatched a courier to Gibraltar, when from our balcony we perceived the little cutter flying before the wind towards the pier-head; and scarcely had the captain set forth in all haste to welcome his favourite, when in walked Lieutenant Fleming of the *Lavinia*, who informed us that the conviction of our having been wrecked had gone abroad in the garrison, that all our quarters and effects were under the government seal, and that himself and another officer had been out since daylight, scouring the coast to discover our remains. He had, he said, merely touched at Algeziras for refreshment, little expecting to find us there, and least of all to be directed in his researches by the sound of laughing voices.

Before noon we were once more under way for the Rock, where we found matters exactly as had been represented, and where we were hailed and welcomed as persons unexpectedly restored from the grave.

For some days we found ample occupation in receiving congratulatory visits and answering inquiries; and instead of all sorts of military inquisitions, a round of fêtes and entertainments, commenced at the government house, was given in our honour. And so ended our excursion—which, if it added one more proof how vainly man proposes to himself any particular day of pleasure, left us not without more grave reflections on the providence of Him who had graciously protected us through so many dangers, and who, if he had not permitted us to partake the unmingled joy we had expected, had accorded us, in its stead, a more abiding cause for thankful praise.

THE GOLDEN DAYS OF GOOD QUEEN BESS.

BY MILES MALLORY.

I SING of old England, so famous in story,
No nation can rival the deeds of her glory ;
But the times to display, are the days of Queen Bess, sir,
Whose name and whose mem'ry posterity bless, sir.
O the golden days of good Queen Bess !
Merry be the memory of Queen Bess !

Then we laughed at the bugbears of Dons and Armadas,
With the Pope, and his legions of holy bravadoes ;
For we knew how to manage both musket and bow, sir,
And could bring down a Spaniard as well as a crow, sir.
O the golden days !

Then our streets were unpaved, and our houses were thatched,
Our windows unbolted, our doors only latched ;
Yet so few were the folks that would murder or rob, sir,
That the hangman was starving for want of a job, sir,
O the golden days !

Then our ladies, with large ruffs so modest and neat,
A pound of beef-steaks for their breakfast could eat ;
While a close quill'd up coif their noddles did fit, sir,
They were truss'd up as tight as a fowl for the spit, sir.
O the golden days

Then jerkins, and doublets, and gay yellow hose,
With a huge looking beard, formed the dress of our beaux,
Strong beer they loved better than claret or hock, sir,
And no poultry they prized like the wing of an ox, sir.
O the golden days !

Good neighbourhood then was as plenty as beef,
And the poor from the rich never wanted relief ;
Then merry went the mill-clack, the shuttle and plough, sir,
And honest men lived by the sweat of their brow, sir.
O the golden days !

Then folks every Sunday went twice to their church,
Nor left the poor parson, as now, in the lurch ;
The squire and the lord might be seen in their pews, sir,
And a crim. con. affair was the strangest of news, sir.
O the golden days !

Then the queen and the subject one interest supported,
And our powerful alliance by all nations was courted ;
For our great men were good, and our good men were great, sir,
And the props of the land were the pillars of state, sir.
O the golden days !

Thus renown'd as they lived, all the days of their lives,
Bright examples of glory to those who survive ;
May we, their descendants, pursue the same plan, sir,
And stand up for England alone, to a man, sir.
O the golden days !

SPENCER MIDDLETON; OR, THE SQUIRE OF RIVER HILL.

BY GEORGE STANLEY, ESQ.

CHAPTER IX.

Where there's a *will*, there's a way.

SOME few days after his declaration to the squire, Mark Redmond was on his way to his legal friend's office. Perjury was in happy mood that day, and with reason; his partner, the adroit and immaculate Fence, had informed him of the firm having clear forty-two-and-a-half per cent. on the last two commutations in which his abilities had been employed; whilst the columns of the morning paper informed Mr. Perjury of the great success of Pat Bullhead and his waistcoat alibi, and the consequent acquittal of his best customer. Indeed he had good reason to rejoice at the issue of the trial, for praise, as unexpected as it was deserved, had nearly been the ruin of the alibi and the entire defence. With the assistance of Perjury, and the *memoria technica* of the waistcoat, Patrick had been enabled, not only to get through his examination in chief with superior credit, but also effectually to baffle the cross-examination of Mr. Serjeant Ferret, the most adroit and ingenious confounder of honest witnesses of the time.

"Witness," said Mr. Justice Dulman, who presided at the trial, "the manner in which you have given your evidence does you great credit."

"Ah bless your honour, my lord," replied Bullhead, "I'm not half the witness I was three years ago—you should only jist of heard me then."

"Well," thought Ferret and Bully, though with far different wishes, "that's enough for this time."

Far from it. Mr. Justice Dulman, being a heavy philosopher, distinctly proved to the jury, in his summing up sermon, that the ill-timed boast was a natural developement of the artlessness and honesty of the witness. How much more readily did Perjury perceive the joke of Pat's answer when he read it in the newspaper report, accompanied by the important verdict of Not Guilty, than when he heard it uttered amid the anxious looks of the occupants of the Old Bailey court.

"Yes," thought Redmond, as he approached his legal friend's residence, "Yes, villful must be villful—I've asked him five times, and he von't knock under—vell, then, it must be—no peaching, Mark—no—Mr. Perjury in—in his room?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Redmond, I believe?"

"The same," replied Mark, as he wended his way to the sanctum. "Morning, Mr. Perjury, morning, sir."

"Ah good morning, my dear sir; pray take a seat; things going on delightfully—Crack's affair compromised—acquitted. It is really quite refreshing—is it not, Mr. Redmond?"

"O quite," replied his visitor, taking a chair.

"And then the squire's business—going on delightfully—no opposition; noble conduct of the parson, though I say it as loses by it; ay, it would have been a fine lawsuit—twenty thousand a year. We shall be all right in about four or five days—the squire will be able to take possession about Wednesday next—don't you think so?"

"No," replied Redmond, sulkily.

"No, Mr. Redmond! why no? Old gentleman to leave on Monday, one day between, to let things settle; and then the new lord comes in on the top of the tide—it wants an ebb and a flow to clean out the old channel. Why no, Mr. Redmond?"

"Because I hear that that ere vill—"

"What, what, my dear sir?" exclaimed Malachi.

"Is likely to be found."

"O, indeed; curious circumstance," said Perjury, settling down into a cautious humour, and keeping one eye very intently fixed on his visitor.

"Why, you see, Mr. Perjury, a friend of mine has told me to tell you to tell the old parson that the vill may perhaps be found."

"If paid for?" said Malachi.

"Just so, Mr. Perjury; the money to be paid, and no questions asked."

"But why have you and the squire split?" asked Malachi.

"Split—who told you ve'd split?" asked Mark quickly.

"Yourself."

"I—what the —— do you mean?"

"Else why come to me, and offer to sell the will to the other side?"

"Who ever said I was agoing to do any such thing?" replied Redmond in a rage. "I come for my friend, and if you von't act, why some von else vill."

"Coolly, coolly, friend Mark," replied the attorney. "Now I'll tell you how things are; you stole the will—you may look as innocent as you can—but you did steal that will."

"Who can prove it?" said Redmond with a sneer.

"Martha!" replied Malachi. "Now don't curse; she can prove it; perhaps she will, perhaps she will not; you've tried to make a bargain with the squire, and have asked too much—then came the quarrel—and then you come to me to sell him to the other side."

"D—n you, sir, what do you mean?" exclaimed Redmond; "if you don't choose to do what my friend wants about the vill—I'll go to Cheatum and Snipe's."

"No you will not, Mr. Returned-convict Redmond, alias Blue Ruin; you know now, don't you? then sit quiet and hear me out. I don't ask why you and the squire have quarrelled; perhaps he would not pay the annuity—well, I don't want to know—you don't care, I suppose, who pays for the will, so as the money is paid?"

"My friend does not," replied Redmond.

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"I—what the —— do you mean?"

"Else why come to me, and offer to sell the will to the other side?"

"Who ever said I was agoing to do any such thing?" replied Redmond in a rage. "I come for my friend, and if you von't act, why some von else vill."

"Coolly, coolly, friend Mark," replied the attorney. "Now I'll tell you how things are; you stole the will—you may look as innocent as you can—but you did steal that will."

"Who can prove it?" said Redmond with a sneer.

"Martha!" replied Malachi. "Now don't curse; she can prove it; perhaps she will, perhaps she will not; you've tried to make a bargain with the squire, and have asked too much—then came the quarrel—and then you come to me to sell him to the other side."

"D—n you, sir, what do you mean?" exclaimed Redmond; "if you don't choose to do what my friend wants about the vill—I'll go to Cheatum and Snipe's."

"No you will not, Mr. Returned-convict Redmond, alias Blue Ruin; you know now, don't you? then sit quiet and hear me out. I don't ask why you and the squire have quarrelled; perhaps he would not pay the annuity—well, I don't want to know—you don't care, I suppose, who pays for the will, so as the money is paid?"

"My friend does not," replied Redmond.

"Your friend—very true ; no friend like self ; then why not let me offer it to the squire ?"

"It's been done afore, and he von't pay."

"O very well ; what is the consideration *your friend* requires ?" asked Perjury, laying a peculiar stress on the words "your friend."

"Ten thousand down—and ask no questions."

"You have the will with you ?" inquired the attorney.

"It is quite safe."

"Ten thousand, and no questions—those are your terms—your friend's at least ; now here are mine : I will not act in this matter, unless I know who is the man. Give me that will, place it in my hands, and at that moment I will pay you five thousand pounds down, and ask no questions—do you agree ?"

"Vhat ! for von half the cash ?"

"Yes ; five thousand at this moment," replied the attorney.

"Another thousand ?" said Redmond.

"Not a farthing," replied Perjury.

"It can't be done for the money."

"O very well ; then I wash my hands of the matter. Don't let me bias your wishes ; pray make what you can of the treasure ; try Cheatum and Snipe, perhaps they'll do it for you for six, seven, or even ten thousand. Can I do anything else for you ? Pray do not let me interfere with your friend's prospects ; let me recommend Mr. Cheatum—suppose you try him ?" said Perjury, with a vicious grin at his victim.

"And if I do, you'll hang me ?"

"Far from it, my dear sir ; I am not Jack Ketch ; the law hangs people, not we humble attorneys," replied Malachi, with a sneer.

"Vhen vill you pay the cash—the five thousand ?" asked Redmond.

"Immediately that I am assured that the deed you propose selling is Aubrey Middleton's last will."

"And you will ask no questions how about its coming ?"

"None," replied Perjury, adroitly counting over a large number of notes, the contents of his well-filled cash-box.

"Vell, then," replied Redmond, proceeding to extract the momentous packet from an inner pocket of his coat, where it had reposed by day on his person, by night beneath his head, since the murder—"Vell then, there's the vill."

Much as Mr. Perjury had assured himself of the share which Redmond had had in the abstraction of the will, he was still greatly astonished, as well at the ease with which he had overcome his fears and his scruples, as with the fact of his having about him so important a deed. In the first ecstasies of his delight he was about to clutch at the prize, and his hand was already extended in furtherance of his desire. But then came policy and prudence, and the hand was quickly withdrawn. Every expression of delight or astonishment passed away, and Perjury was once more the cool calculating attorney.

Redmond threw the packet on the table. Perjury went on with an answer to an invitation to dinner, inditing the great pleasure he

should have in accepting Mrs. George Fiddledab's invitation to dinner on the following Friday.

"Vill you take the thing?" asked Redmond, unable to comprehend the attorney's sudden alteration of conduct.

"O, if you wish it; but really, on second thoughts, I doubt whether it's worth the five thousand," replied Perjury, as he inserted his polite answer in an envelope.

Redmond stared with astonishment; "Vhy, the squire vould give double the money."

"No, he would not," replied Perjury coolly, "or you would have sold it to him long ago."

"It isn't mine," said Mark.

"Then I cannot pay you the money. None but principals need apply. You had better try Mr. Cheatum."

"Wery vell, then, I shall take it back again; five thousand, and not a penny less."

"Just as you please; but you will please to remember, Mr. Mark Redmond, that any one who can prove that he saw this will in your possession, and could swear that you had offered to sell it for a certain sum, that you confessed you knew who had taken it, and a few other pleasant circumstances, might occasion you some trouble."

"You'll peach, vill you? you'll sell me, you ——"

"Far from it, Mr. Mark Redmond; but you must please to remember that the powers of a subpcena, and the searching nature of an oath——"

"And the villingness of the snitch," muttered Mark.

"And the dreadful nature of the crime of perjury, would not allow me to screen even such an old valued friend as Mr. Mark Redmond. Suppose we say a thousand down, and no questions."

"Come, come," said his friend, "that's a little too bad—von thousand now, instead of five afore—that's a little too bad."

"Pray do not for one moment suppose, Mr. Redmond, that I wish to compel you to accede to my offer—it is quite optional."

"Yes; hang or starve," muttered Redmond—"hang or starve."

"Excuse me, Mr. Redmond, excuse me for reminding you once more, that it is the law and not lawyers that hang. Suppose we say a thousand down, and no questions."

"Vell, take the thing, and give me the shiners."

"Excuse my looking first—taste and try before you buy," said Malachi, as he proceeded to undo the packet. "Fool, did you think to take *me* in?" he continued, in a deep tone, as he flung the useless bundle of papers across the table to Redmond. "Do you take Malachi Perjury for a fool?"

"So help me God, I knew it not," said Redmond, turning white with rage and disappointment.

"Tush, tush, you thought to sell the will twice over; the kernel and the husk too," replied Malachi with a sneer, as he kicked away from him the cover in which the will had been enclosed.

"I pledge my honour,"—began Redmond.

"Undoubtedly."

"I swear," continued Mark.

"To anything," muttered the attorney, interrupting him.

"From the moment I took that vill out of the old un's boro, or whatever they call it, it's been in this pocket ; and no one, neither I nor any von else, has seen it or touched it."

"Indeed !" remarked Perjury, with an incredulous smile.

"I tell ye," continued Redmond, excited by Perjury's sneers and doubts, "I tell ye the squire took care of the old un, and I put the jemmy into the boro, and grabbed that thing ; and that there has been with me day and night from that there time—I swear it has."

"A most curious circumstance, Mr. Redmond, most curious ; it might perhaps tend to lessen the value of your rent-charge," said the attorney.

"D—n it, you won't peach, will you, Malachi ?"

"O dear no, Mr. Redmond ; I think it would be best for all parties that the delusion should be maintained, at least for a time. May I inquire what were your demands—the demands of your friend I mean—on the young squire ?"

"I asked," replied Mark surlily, "the two thousand, and to make an honest woman of my sister."

"Humph ! allow me to suggest, that you drop the last item—at least for the present—you disagree—well, Mr. Redmond, I advised for the best. It is of consequence that the squire should be brought to terms quickly ; the secret might, you know—might creep out. Of course you must act as you please ; but on no other terms can I offer to assist you. Nor indeed could I, as the squire's legal friend, forbear from mentioning to him the fact of the will, unless I saw that my keeping silent would enable him to start free of all domestic ties."

"Will you insure me my annuity ?"

"Certainly, for ten per cent. per annum. Come, is it a bargain ? secrets might come out, you know. Is it a bargain ?"

"Well, if I must I must," replied Redmond.

"Read that letter. Will that do ?" said Perjury, as he flung across the table a few lines he had been diligently tracing during the conversation.

"Dear Sir," said Redmond, reading the letter—"It is my painful duty to inform you, that Mr. M. R., the gentleman to whom the rent-charge of two thousand pounds has been granted by you over the M. estates, has this morning tendered to me a certain document, which you know might render matters unpleasant to our friends. He is willing to withdraw the demand about the lady, if the sum of five thousand pounds can be obtained for a friend of his to whom his affairs are intimately known. This and the rent-charge will render all matters easy. Requesting your attention to this, believe me, your obedient servant, MALACHI PERJURY." I say, Malachi, who's the friend ?" continued Redmond.

"Malachi Perjury," replied the attorney.

"What ! five thousand down, and ten per cent. on the annuity ?"

"Precisely so ; ten per cent. per annum, Mr. Redmond. Pray don't let me bias you ; this letter is soon destroyed, and secrets are not always discovered."

"No, no," replied his victim, "you know I must. Well, give me the letter; it's better than nothing after all."

"As you please, as you please, my dear sir. May I trouble you to sign this small memorandum of agreement—per centage for recovery of the annuity, and other necessary expenses, ten pounds per annum—thank you. Will you take the note? Perhaps I had better send it? I believe I know his address. Moses," he continued, as the half-bred Jew put his head in in answer to the bell, "take this letter to the squire; you know where. Oh," calling him back from the half-closed door, "just put that into the post as you go by. Good morning, Mr. Redmond, good morning."

Could Mark have seen the direction of that second letter, he would have wondered; could he have read its contents, he would have trembled for his annuity. It bore this superscription:—

"Rev. Spencer Middleton, Rectory, Wilmington, Herts.

"Rev. Sir," said the letter, "though a perfect stranger to you, we think it our duty to inform you, that a friend of ours, over whom we have some power, has discovered, as he believes, the lost will of Mr. Aubrey Middleton. He has only seen the cover which bears an indorsement of the last will and testament of A. Middleton, Esq., executed November — 18—. Should you think it worth while to prosecute this hint, we shall be happy to place you in communication with our friend, with whom, if you will address a letter to Cornelius O. Brotteston, to my care, you may at once enter on your inquiries.

"Believe us, sir, your obedient servants,

"MESSRS. PERJURY and FENCE."

"Well," thought Malachi, "either way, shall not be far out. If the parson will come down with ten thousand, why then I think my friend may give up that pretty enclosure; if he won't, why then for five thousand it gets burnt. How strangely some things happen," he said musingly, as he stood baking his legs over the fire, where we would now leave him, did we not think it better to clear off a few events here, in order to expedite the progress of our tale.

The success of Malachi Perjury's plans was such as might be expected. Our hero's father, guided by his legal adviser, soon entered into a correspondence with a mysterious Cornelius O. Brotteston, and after very many pros and cons, offers and counter offers, schemes, plans, and preparations, resigned his pretensions to the mysterious parcel, being unwilling to buy a pig in a poke, whilst Cornelius honestly considered the wares he offered for sale might by exposure to the air be deteriorated in value. Not so the squire. After a good deal of careful handling and masterly manœuvring on the part of Malachi, the five thousand was gladly paid, the annuity secured to Redmond, and a small shooting-box, about six miles from Riverley, secured at the squire's expense for the new country gentleman. Sic transit gloria fundi.

CHAPTER X.

In which the story, after many apologies, and a digression on jackdaws, comes to a stand-still.

Dear, dear, what a truly miserable life is that of an author ! writing and scribbling, retailing old jokes, thinking out new ones, making laughing-stocks of his most intimate friends, caricaturing an aunt or a cousin, under the vain hope of being able to please the reading public, and then, after all, not even pleasing himself.

" Pray, Mr. Author, who is your hero ?" asks Lady Sophia Fiddle-dab.—" Mr. Spencer Middleton, my lady." " Old or young ?"—" Young, my lady." " Why, sir, what on earth has he done ?"—" About as much as any other young gentleman, of his age and circumstances, would be likely to do—he has jumped out of window, broke open a door, got into debt, and tried to get out of it."—" And, Mr. Author, do you really pretend to palm such a milk-and-water personage as that on us as a hero ?"—" As you please, my lady." " He has never been in love," says Miss Rosabella Matilda Claretta Smith Smyth. " He has not fought a duel," says Major-general Sir Cornelius O. Bluster. " He does not talk philosophy," says Sir Edward Lumber Wishywashy.

Ladies and gentlemen—*de gustibus non disputandum*—Anglice, there's no doubt it blows a gale, as Mrs. Timotheus Roundabout observed on the summit of Shakspeare's cliff. If you ask me why my hero is not the chief person in the tale, I refer you to every novel, from Sir Charles Grandison to the last three volumes post octavo, edited by my Lord Dash. If you imperatively demand a duel, and, like the Roman ladies, delight not save in personal conflict ; and as bear-baiting is illegal, and bull-hunting contrary to the Police Act, have taken the duellum under your especial patronage, I will order a couple of pair of Joe Mantons and coffee for one for the next chapter. If you desire bad French morality worse translated, or thieves' philosophy, I will ask my esteemed friends, Sir Edward Lumber Wishywashy and Mr. Heartless Newgate for some few passages from their note-book. But really and truly this love gives me some uneasiness ; because it never happened to me to be in love—at least, I never yet took to lying on a couch, and sighing like a high-pressure steam-engine. I never yet composed a sonnet containing numberless allusions of a very familiar kind to the sun, the moon, the seven stars, and blessings on a lady's eyes. I never yet walked nine miles through a snow-storm to call on an old lady, who had a young niece from the country staying with her ; and I never yet worked myself into such a state of selfishness, as to say with that most disgusting of all songs, " Woman,"

If she be not fair for me,
What care I how fair she be ?

I never kept a lock of any lady's hair, save my old mother's. I never eschewed getting stout ; took to biscuits and soda-water ; was particular about the whiteness of my gloves, and the blackness of my toe covers, or copied music for my lady cousins. I never was caught

in an interesting situation with the lady I detested, by the lady I admired, or vice versâ,—how then can I describe the tender passion, the thrilling emotion, the soft impeachment? Unless I do so, it is very clear that there will be *Diabolum remunerare et nulla pix ferefacta*, as Professor Von Muddle pate says in his last work on the fragments of Athenæus, see Black and Armstrong's last advertisement, or, as Tom Davis Anglicises it, "the Devil to pay, and no pitch hot;" why, I must e'en beg, borrow, and steal, as Jim Crow did the jackdaws.

Before, however, I proceed to extract a select scene from "The Interesting Faux Pas," or the "Noble Pickpocket," or "Sally Smith, the Cadger's Mistress," allow me to throw a slight light on the subject of Jim Crow and the Jackdaws.

The good city of N. has long been celebrated for its Norman cathedral, the English antiquaries' loved haunt, its three dozen churches, embracing every variation of style, from the rude round towers of the Templar, to the debased architecture of the Reformation, its narrow break-neck streets, inhumanly paved with the hardest, sharpest, and most unchristian little black flints, with their smallest ends uppermost, its deep, narrow, mud-coloured river, its lowering factory chimneys, and its ragged children.

The cathedral of the city, in whose venerable precincts the subjects of this story erst dwelt, must arrest the attention of the most careless observer. The simple grandeur of the plain round arches of the nave, in triple tier raised high in air, the incongruity of the vast Tudor screen which defaces the small chancel, intermingling its florid ornament, flattened arch, and flowing tracery with the round arch and the dog-tooth and billet mouldings of its Norman predecessor; the filling up of the narrow transepts with the wooden opera-box of the bishop, and the unique extension of the chancel (if it can so be called) far down into the nave, cannot fail to attract the most unarchitectural visitor.

Over the diocese to which this cathedral belongs, it once happened that Hugh (for so we will call him) was bishop. When his election was made known, many persons doubted what his tenets might be. He soon resolved the difficulty.

"Sir," said Bishop Hugh to his archdeacon, "sir, strictly speaking, I am an ornithologist," and so he was.

Bishop Hugh, whilst walking through the south aisle of the nave of the cathedral, espies a jackdaw's nest on the capital of one of the pillars. A moment's reflection decided him what he would do.

"William," he said, to the keeper of his feathered friends, his ornithological factotum; "William, do you see that jackdaw's nest?"

William bowed his assent, and the bishop went on.

"Take that nest, bring it up to the palace, and we'll educate them; we'll find out their habits; we shall discover something new;" and the bishop rubbed his hands. The nest was soon borne away to the palace, and the young jackdaws were educated as young jackdaws never were before. They were episcopal pets. Mr. Bishop, Mrs. Bishop, the Masters and Misses Bishops, all tended and loved their jackdaws. Accidents will happen in the best regulated families. The jackdaws were stolen—ay, lost, stolen, or strayed. Proclamation after

proclamation came forth, offering pardon to all but the actual thief: rewards, threats, excommunications in small, followed; but all would not do: the jackdaws were gone.

When the days of mourning for his feathered children were over, Hugh the bishop descended once more to his favourite morning's haunt—the market. As he bent over a butter-stall, he heard a boy behind him say, “I tell’ee, Joe, you stole Jim Crow’s jackdaws.”

The bishop was awake in a moment: seizing the boy by the collar, he cried, “What did you say, sir, about the jackdaws?”

“Voi, I said Joe stoled Jim Crow’s jackdaws.”

“And who is Jim Crow, my good boy?” inquired his right reverence with a patronizing air.

“Voi, the bishop, you fool.”

The bishop kept his temper; the cause of his daws, not the dignity of his episcopate, was to be revenged. He persuaded his informant to point out the villain Joe, seized him with his other hand, and hauled accuser and accused before the judge.

The judge demurred at the evidence.

“My lord,” he respectfully said, “it amounts to but this: one boy says that another boy stole one Jim Crow’s jackdaws, and the same boy says that Jim Crow is your lordship: is your lordship certain of your own identity?”

The bishop grew warm. His jackdaws were to be avenged, and they should be avenged.

“Perhaps, my lord, time may elicit some corroborative evidence. I will therefore remand the boy until to-morrow,” said the judge.

So the bishop got half what he wanted.

Poor Joe’s father was a respectable tradesman, and it grieved him sore that his son should be accused of the jackdaw felony. He questioned him closely, and also his accuser, and discovered that the cry of “Who stole Jim Crow’s jackdaws?” was as common in those days as “Does your mother know you’re out?” in these: so he went to his friend lawyer Johnson.

“Go to the bishop; tell him how the case is; and request him to forbear any further inquiries—if he won’t accede, ask him these few questions,” said lawyer Johnson.

And the lawyer primed the client.

To the bishop went the disconsolate father; the bishop looked stern.

“Your lordship,” said he, “I am the father of the boy whom you have accused of stealing your jackdaws.”

The bishop looked savage.

“I have closely questioned my son, and find that the expression ‘Who stole Jim Crow’s jackdaws?’ is a common joke in the city.”

“Joke, sir—joke, sir! what do you mean by a joke?” screamed Bishop Hugh.

The disconsolate father tendered an explanation.

The bishop grew red and white, then white and red. As for letting the boy off, that was quite out of the question. So the father turned to his questions.

“Will your lordship permit me to ask you a few questions. I hope you will not be affronted at them.”

"O dear no," said Bishop Hugh; "ask on."

"Pray can your lordship inform me to whom the cathedral belongs?"

"The cathedral—what do you want about the cathedral?" asked the bishop.

"Pray, my lord, does it belong to you, or to the dean and chapter?"

"O, the dean and chapter, of course," replied Bishop Hugh.

"Pray then, my lord, did you ask the leave of the dean and chapter when you took that jackdaw's nest?"

"Pooh, pooh, not I," replied the bishop.

"Then, my lord, you were the first thief, and my son only the second; good morning to your lordship."

So Jim Crow lost his jackdaws and his temper too.

Peradventure such may be my case, should I extract a select scene from any of the works of those high literary names I have just before mentioned. The author of the "Interestesting Seduction" will turn out the first thief, and George Stanley only the second.

CHAPTER XI.

The last night of the races—Our hero jumps into the water and into love at the same time.

Since we last saw our hero, more than a year has passed away, and all things are changed. The commoner's apology for a gown has grown into the full sleeves of the Bible clerk. The handsome ground-floor rooms, with their gay carpet, oak-panelled walls, and handsome furniture, have passed into the possession of the honourable Tom Mowbray. The glittering books have given place to working tools, more useful than ornamental: and Spencer Middleton, esq., commoner of St. Luke's, is junior Bible clerk, abiding high aloft in garrets on the south-east corner of the second quadrangle. It was a warm, sunny day in June; everything without looked bright and cheerful: the sun was full in the heavens, and all nature seemed to rejoice in his beams: before a tall standing desk, poring over the sixth book of the ethics, his form enveloped in a dressing-gown, his hair showing evident marks of wandering fingers, his hands plunged fixedly in his pockets, and his whole appearance that of the most perfect abstraction, stood our hero, perfectly deaf to the many raps and kicks that resounded on his door.

"Middleton—Spencer—let me in; it's I, Tom Davis. I must see you—on business; let me in—let me in—(bang)—Middleton—(bang)—(bang)."

At last the student was roused, and proceeding to his oak, admitted his crony, being red in the face from his antiquercal exertions.

"What's the matter, Davis?" asked Middleton, running his left hand through his hair.

"Matter! the very devil—Tom Dowling's rusticated for two terms—to-morrow's the last night of the races, and we've no stroke."

"What was poor Tom victimized for?" inquired Spencer, proceeding to devour the remains of his breakfast-roll, as an apology for a luncheon.

"Took the president for the porter, d—d his eyes, and knocked him through his own hall window."

"Well, won't James Garthan take it?" said Spencer.

"No, they all say you must, Spencer," replied Davis.

Spencer looked doubtful.

"Come, come, Spencer, do take it; look here—you come up from six to eight, then Tom Garthan moves up from four to six, and Phillips comes in as four, and then heigh for the Peterites and the head of the river."

"But we ought to go out for practice—Phillips has not pulled this term with us," replied Spencer.

"Just the point we came to—now can you spare time for a spirt as far as the lock and back, some time to-day?"

"Why, I hardly know," replied Spencer dubiously; "you see I have to get up this precious chapter for to-morrow, and I promised Hamilton to go with him and his mother and sister to Magdalen chapel at four, and then to feed with them at the Angel afterwards."

"If you can contrive about the lecture, I can settle—I have settled the rest."

"O yes," said our hero, "if I can get a couple of hours to-night, it will be all clear."

"Very well then; Hamilton, who was with us at the confab about the boat, lets you off the chapel affair, and promises to let you rise by nine o'clock from the feed, or earlier if you wish. Now then if you will take a quiet little spirt from three to four, and all things don't go quite wrong, why I will still take six to five we top the mast by half after eight to-morrow evening."

"Agreed," said Spencer; "let me see, it wants about twenty to three now; you're all ready: stay while I dress, and then heigh for a good pull. By-the-bye," he continued, with his head half in and half out of his basin, "did Gerard tell you of the letter from old Rendlesham, about the row at Riverley?"

"Yes; he said something about a breeze between the new squire and the old lord, and a prospect of a stand-up fight between the two radicals."

"It happened at a magistrates' meeting," said Spencer, endeavouring to get into his Jersey—a poaching case. "The new squire had caught three fellows out dragging with a net—at least his game-keeper had—this was last September—pounced on them, and pulled them up before the bench. One of the fellows was the son of Simon Storks, the Mowbray chimneysweep, a sure vote, so the old lord took him under his wing. After the evidence had been given, he very wisely observed, 'You see, gentlemen, poor Storks was only following the rest—walking nearly four yards behind the others—evidently not intending to net birds.' 'Come, my lord,' blurted out the new squire, 'I should have thought any one would have known that the best man is always placed at the foot of a drag-net—any sportsman would have known that.' This angered the old baron; they had been as

thick as thieves before ; so craning up his neck, he sneered out, ' It is not every person who has the advantage of a gamekeeper's daughter for their mother ! ' ' Nor every nobleman who has a washerwoman for his grandmother,' replied the squire. From one thing they went on to another, until, after a furious row in the justice-room, the new friends met, never more to meet."

" But what has all this to do with the present election ? " asked Davis.

" Why, no time so good for paying off scores as an election—it is the old fight again, Middleton and Mowbray, and no longer blue and yellow, but all yellow. Old Rendlesham rubs his hands, and cackles over the fray. When rogues fall out, honest men come to their rights ; so now is the time, if ever, to work in a good blue man."

" Chance—not a doit—they would soon coalesce to keep out a blue ; and now that Middleton and Mowbray are all like Tom Trueman's cocks, a blue would have as much chance as the babies had with Herod," said Tom.

" Old Rendlesham says that the election would be nearly certain, the expense a mere trifle—and as for Middleton and Mowbray coalescing, I should as soon expect my old uncle to rise from his grave to plump for the honourable Tom. What do you say to starting ? "

" I start ! " exclaimed Davis.

" Yes, you—your uncle Mornington has some influence in the place—all the few good and true men would back you up—and what is more to the purpose, if you will come forward, he, Rendlesham, and the Creefords will bring you out of the scrape for five hundred pounds—so writes the dear old vicar. Come Davis, look alive, and write M.P. after your name."

" When does it come on ? " asked Tom, beginning to feel dubious in his resistance to the invitation.

" Not under a month. Gerard Mowbray will be gazetted as a Lord of Treasury on Friday week—on the Monday after they will move for a new writ, and then in about six or seven days will be the election."

" But if I do," said Davis, in a most relenting humour—" if I do stand, when should I start ? how should I manage ? "

" Leave all that to your uncle and Rendlesham. This is not the first letter I have had on the subject—let me only be able to promise you and your five hundred pounds, and they will soon set all things afloat at the proper time."

" O, confound the money," replied Tom ; " I don't care about that—it's the making a fool of oneself—the being soundly thrashed. What does Gerard Hamilton say to it ? "

" Just as I do," said Spencer, as he slipped out of his candle-box, *vulgo dicto* bed-room, all ready for starting.

" Well, then, if we bump the Peterites, I will consent to stand."

" Is it a bargain ? " asked Spencer.

Tom assented.

" Then you shall stand, if I die for it. I'd give all I have to floor the Middleton and Mowbray factions. Come along—won't I work the darling of a boat ? "

And now the time for the practice being arrived, the cronies set out for King's boat-house, to practise their new No. four.

Right merry was the party that manned that boat—no quarrelling about pulling under B., or Eton under Westminster, or *vice versa*; all was in good English harmony, every man determined to do his best, and assist in giving “a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether,” as they say at sea.

What an elegant creature is a long eight-oared, as, manned by its lusty crew, it skips over the surface of the water, and leaps merrily, like a thing of life! The sinewy forms, the measured stroke, the flashing blades of the oars, the machine-like time of the stroke, the calm steady face of the coxswain, as, ropes in hand, he sways his body with the swing of the stroke, now watching the bend of a forward rower, then glancing at the blades of the oars, keeping all his men up to their work, checking the too impetuous, and husbanding their strength, urging on the slow, and making each obliged to look to himself, and himself alone, and works as if the success of the race depended on his sole exertions.

Tom Davis was the beau ideal of a good coxswain. He was not above the common height, rather under than over, compact and strong built, and yet fairly light for his strength, cool, immovable when in a race, bending neither to the right nor the left, his rudder ropes ever tight, so that the slightest touch affected the position of the boat; his eye was on every man in the boat, and no word ever escaped him, either during a regular practice or a race, than Now bow—now three, or such short orders as seemed absolutely necessary for the due ordering of the matters committed to his charge. From the barge to the lock at Ifley, during that practice, Tom kept his men in his usual order. When the lock was passed, he relaxed.

“Now for talk, and a paddle to Sandford,” said the stern coxswain. “Who'll start a good story?”

“You had better do it yourself,” said number four.

“I tell a story!” said the modest Tom; “I should as soon think of poor old deaf Mackintosh turning eastern story-teller.”

“And who was old Mackintosh?” asked number five, giving a wink all round to let the incorrigible Tom go on with his fun.

“O, you remember deaf Mack,” replied Tom.

“Not I,” was the answer; “what was he like?”

“A tall dark commoner, half Spaniard, half Scott, fiery as the one, and shrewd as the other, and inheriting a most unpleasant deafness from some chief of Glen Conochie or high Don of Andalusia,” was Davis's description.

“Gone before my time—rusticated, I suppose,” replied number five.

“Ay, in my second collections, he went in before the Dons in most unacademical costume. A *green* cut-a-way, and hunting buttons, very violent waistcoat, thunder and lightning trousers, and a tie in which every colour of the rainbow was clearly developed, his tie-pin the cross bars of a drag in cornelian set in gold. I think I see him now, his *tout ensemble* completed by an exceedingly short gown, extending nearly to the buttons of his coat, whilst one string went onwards to

the extremity of his right coat-tail, having left its left-hand brother just below the shoulder blade. A slight smile stole over the faces of the inquisitors as he neared the table, and depositing his books on its cold oak surface, turned his best ear towards the doctor."

"Well done, Tom," shouted the crew; "try again—try again—tell a good one while you're at it."

"True, true as the Bible, 'pon honour. Well, but to proceed," said Tom: "after some real, and some sham deafness when the questions were tough, or the words very hard, followed by a slight mistake in construing a certain passage in the Testament into 'the devil was a liar, and his father also,' and an attempt at turning 'Barbara celarent Darii ferioque prioris' into something about concealing the barbarites of Darius, the dear doctor himself took him in hand."

"Now it's coming," said bow, "look a-head."

"Steady, bow—not so quick in the feather," answered Tom, relapsing for the moment into the steady coxswain; 'steady all—very good all—steady,' but then unbending again, he went on. 'Mr. Mackintosh,' said the preses, 'you have read your Butler, sir?' 'Eh, sir,' replied Mackintosh, driving his left ear across the table. 'Your Butler,' screamed the doctor. 'Yes, sir, yes, sir—I have a Butler,' was Mack's reply out loud; and then, sotto voce, to himself, though loud enough to all the rest, 'Butler—damned funny that, anyhow.' 'I am exceedingly delighted to hear you say so, sir,' replied the doctor, to whom the conclusion of the sentence had been lost; 'what does he say concerning moral government?' Mackintosh stared. 'The moral government of the universe,' reiterated the doctor, very red with rage and bawling. 'I'm sure I don't know,' reply Mackintosh. 'Not know, sir! not know! Pray, sir, did you ever analyse your Hudibras,' screamed the preses, hissing hot. 'Analyse Butler! I should think not,' replied the examined one. 'And why not, sir? do you ever expect to remember your Butler without an analysis?—What, analyse Hudibras?' "

"Well, I never," said stroke.

"Did you ever?" said seven.

"No, I never," said six.

"No one," continued Tom, as they rounded the point at Kennington; "no one could stand this," so the rest of his reply was lost in a regular roar of laughter. The doctor looked nearly mad, and immediately commenced an attack on Mack's most vulnerable point, his dress: first came the cutaway, then the violent waistcoat, then the more violent tie, the very bad taste of the cross bars, and the very disgusting nature of the entire turn-out. As poor Mackintosh retreated from the table, the eye of the doctor fell on the apology for a gown. 'Mr. Mackintosh,' shouted the little man. Mack walked on in his deafness. 'Mr. Mackintosh,' screamed the doctor. 'Eh, sir?' replied Mack, as he returned to the dissecting table. 'Do you call that a gown, sir?' said the doctor, pointing with the finger of disgust to the piece of princes' stuff that hung over the cutaway. 'No, sir,' replied Mack, after a careful survey of the entire animal; 'we call them tail-covers.' "

"Rusticated for a year of course," exclaimed Spencer.

"No of course in the matter," replied Davis; "the doctor looked coolly savage as he said, 'You will confine yourself to your rooms until further orders, Mr. Mackintosh.' But the row did not end here. 'I am very sorry, sir, that I cannot do so,' was Mack's cool reply, 'as I have booked my place by the Tantivy at three to-day.' 'You shall, sir,' shouted the doctor. 'Certainly, sir, if you will pay me fourteen shillings.' 'You are rusticated for a year, sir,' said the preses, rising in his wrath. 'Thank you, sir,' replied Mackintosh with a graceful bow. 'You have mistaken your college,' Mr. Mackintosh. 'No, sir,' replied Mack, as he bowed himself out, 'you have mistaken your man.'"

"And what became of Mack?" asked two or three at once.

"After such an affair of honour as that, he very wisely went into the army, and cut Oxford altogether," replied Tom.

"Pleasant work for the rest of the collections' men after such a breeze," suggested Spencer.

"I guess it was; lucky was the man who escaped without a blowing up, for so dire was the little man's wrath, that his mutton-chop and porter remained untasted, and he had so many excuses for long lectures, that he kept his tongue going all day long.—Steady all—slack, bow side—ship—now, bow, jump ashore,—now for skittles and Mrs. Burgesses' spiced tankard—and then I'll tell you Joe Sermon's turn-up with the old'un on the same day as deaf Mackie's."

In a few minutes the nine were wandering towards the neat little public-house at Sandford, some three parts attired, some half way towards decency, others but slightly clothed.

"Hilloa, Middleton," said a tall man in a pink Jersey; "you stroke."

"Yes, Tom Dowling knocked down our preses, and is off for a country tour, so they have promoted me from six," replied Middleton.

"What will you give?" said Davis to the pink man—he was a Peterite.

"Seven to five against you," replied pinky.

"Done," said Tom, "pounds. Come along, Lukians;" and away went the crew over the lock to drink beer and miss the skittles.

"Come, Davis, let us have Joe Sermon's breeze with the doctor," said Spencer, as he sat down after paying sixpence for missing his round at the skittles.

"Well, it's a refresher certainly, for it had been moving work that day in collections, as the cobweb said to the broom. 'What book do you take up this time?' asked the preses, as Joe stood fingering his much-loved Terence. 'The six plays of Terence,' was Joe's cool reply. 'Terence, Mr. Sermon! why, to my certain knowledge you have taken up Terence twice, if not three times, already.' 'Parts of it, sir, seven times; the whole of it, now, for the first and only time,' replied Sermon. 'Parts, sir! parts, sir! how do you mean, sir?' asked the doctor. 'Why, let me remember,' said Joe, tapping his forehead with the middle finger of his right hand; "for my first collections, I think I took up the Andria and Phormio—for my second,

the Eunuch and the Heauton timorumenos—for my third, the Adelphi and the Hecyra.’ ‘Indeed, sir, and what for your fourth and fifth collections?’ asked the preses. ‘Fourth and fifth!—O fourth, Andria, Eunuch, and Heauton—fifth, Phormio, Adelphi, and Hecyra.’ ‘Indeed, sir? and pray what for your sixth collection, now that you had already taken it up twice?’ continued the doctor. ‘Sixth, I think, Andria, Phormio, Adelphi.’ ‘And for your seventh, Mr. Sermon?’ ‘Eunuch, Heauton, and Hecyra,’ was Joe’s cool reply. ‘And now, sir, you dare to offer it for the fourth time!’ exclaimed the irate doctor. ‘Excuse me, doctor—I have never taken up the same plays twice, and certainly never as yet the entire six at one collection.’”

“A fine practical specimen of the science of permutations and combinations, as applied to Terence and collections,” observed the mathematical number four.

“So would the doctor have thought, I dare say, had not Mack’s affair made him tearing savage, so down he came on Joe with a request that he would translate the Andria by the first day of the ensuing term.”

“Rather a stinger that,” suggested Spencer.

“So thought Sermon,” continued Tom; “so he coolly hinted to the doctor, that though he should have had great pleasure in favouring him with a new copy of Terence in English, yet that as he had just received his commission in the forty-fifth, he was almost afraid that his military duties would prevent his attending to the request, or again abiding within the walls of St. Luke’s after that day.’ Whereupon, with a low bow to the astonished doctor, and a modest request to the equally astonished bursar, that he would take his last term’s batels out of his caution-money, as he did not intend to keep his name on the books of the college, a cool good morning to the two tutors, he bowed himself out, and escaped scatheless from the hall of Eblis. And so now, the story, the beer, and the skittles being done, on to the boat, and let me see you do your very best up to King’s.”

With the performance of the Lukians, Tom was so well pleased, as not only not to hedge his former bets, but, on the contrary, to double them, not only at the old odds, but at six to five, and even, before the hour for the decision of the contest arrived.

What a highly animated scene is an Oxford boat-race, a racing night on the Iris. From about six in the evening, perhaps a fine warm summer’s evening, with just sufficient breeze stirring to ripple the gentle waters of the river; from that hour, Oxford begins to pour out its varied inhabitants. On the bright waters are commixed the light skiff and more fragile canoe, the four, with its well-picked crew, the long light eight, as each college boat rows off from the boat-house on its quiet trip to Sandford, eager parties may be seen on the Abingdon bank of the river, watching its every motion, criticising this or that of the crew, marking its elegant proportions, giving some earnest exhortation to the stroke or the coxswain. Then, as the hour of eight gradually comes on, the entire bank teems with the population of the city, gownsmen, in every dress but that of the university; here and there a white-cravated don, still hankering after the boating, scouts of

the various colleges venturing their small bets on *their own* boat, and talking of our *stroke* and our *coxswain*. Gradually the Christ-church meadows become filled with the ladies and more sedate dons, and even heads of houses, whose academical rank forbids their crossing to the towing path to be jostled with the moving crowd.

As eight peals from the beautiful Norman church of Ifley, the moving masses become congregated about the lock, and from thence upward to the Kennington turn. Bets are flying about, all is noise and bustle, when the word is given "Here they come," as the head boat is seen entering the broad part of the Kennington reach, another and now another succeeds, all resting on their oars as they enter the reach, and then one after the other, taking "a sharp spirt" for a short distance to get themselves ready for the eventful start. Ere ten minutes are over, Ifley lock is filled with the eights, ten or a dozen all packed in together, each crew eyeing the other with critical eyes, and remarking on the thews and muscles of their antagonists.

The crowd now begins to move downwards towards Oxford. Those who have little confidence in their wind enabling them to hold out the entire way with the boats, going some as far as the long bridges, others to the centre of the Gut, a third party to the Two Water Stone, a fourth to the place of the leading boat. The lock gate opens; forth come the boats in order, gradually moving up to their stations, and after numberless endeavours to get them all into their right places, and scolding of umpires, a good deal of swearing, and great loss of time, and greater loss of temper, they are at last placed, and await the pistol of the lockman to start them in their race.

When this tale was first projected, it was determined that no college should be named by its true title; adhering to this principle, in the account of the approaching contest, fictitious names will appear on our page, that those who (like the author) wish not to fix any story or fact here related on any one college or man in the university, may take advantage of the obscurity, whilst those who read only to detect or invent likenesses, may be the more puzzled thereby.

This race, in which our hero was to take so prominent a part, was of more than usual interest. The Lukians, until this year almost unknown among the racing colleges, had practised carefully and steadily, and reaped their reward. Unlike the rest of the colleges, they had studiously forborne to attempt races with other college boats in the evenings of the practising boats, and consequently had gone on unnoticed and unknown. On the first night of the races, they had taken their place at the bottom of the river, thirteenth on the list. Night after night they went upwards, step by step. Every night had seen them victorious over their immediate predecessor ere the dangerous passage of the Gut. St. Luke's was now second on the river; St. Peter's first—as yet invincible for three seasons. Immediately behind was St. Philip's, their last victims, now determined, on this the last night, to recover the place they had lost to the fortunate Lukites. Both the Peterites and the Philipites had been making every exertion, the one to keep their lead, the other to regain their position. Old men had been summoned from the country, various changes had been made in their respective crews; many lectures had been submitted to

from the redoubtable Stephen Davis ; Eton had healed their quarrel with Westminster, and agreed to make common cause in flooring the "savages," as they called the Lukites ; several private quarrels had been made up, and the honourable John Dash had consented to pull under Mr. Sumpkins, all for the honour of St Philip's, the glory of St. Peter's, or the better securing of their various bets.

Various were the opinions offered on both sides of Ifley lock on that night, as the three leading boats pulled out into the stream, and proceed to their respective places. First, the fact of the absence of the old stroke of the Lukites sent the odds down from seven to five, and even seven to four, against them. Then it came out that number six of the Peterites was rather out of condition, and up went the odds a point, or even a point and a half. Then the Philipites began to laud the pulling of their men, and speak of the way in which they run into the Lukites at the island ; on this the odds dropped again to their old place. Lastly, it eked out that Tom Davis, the redoubtable Tom, the lion of the river, the oracle of boating, whose dog even knew the river as well as Stephen Davis, whilst its master's knowledge could not be estimated—it eked out that Tom had commissioned a friend to book every offer against St. Luke's from seven to five down to even ; whereupon, just as the boats were at last got into their places, and the crowd was already on the move, the betting rose to even, St. Luke's favourite for choice.

And now the flash of the pistol was seen, the rowers bent backwards, the water flashed beneath the blades of the oars, and the contending boats were off, each in her predecessor's wake. The whole bank seems alive with a running, shouting, bustling crowd of over-excited men. "Go it, St. Peter's !" "Go it, St. Luke's !" "Go it, St. Philip's !" comes roaring all around, as the leading boats emerge from the corner by the willows, their light prows quivering beneath the rapid strokes of the oars. By the time the Two Water Stone is gained by the leading boat, the rapid exhausting stroke of the Philipites has already lessened the distance between them and the Lukites by full half the length, whilst the slow stroke of the latter has hardly kept them at their original distance from the Peterites. The excitement becomes greatly increased—the Philipites are half wild with delight, and the cry of "Philips !" "Philips !" is heard far above every other sound. As the Gut is entered, they are hardly a yard behind the Lukites, and the excitement is tremendous, the crush at the long bridges truly dreadful. Still the Lukites pull the same stroke ; and those that were near could hear Davis constantly saying, "Steady, steady," "no spurting." By the time the first boat has crossed over the other bank, on emerging from the Gut, the Philipites are thoroughly done, dropping back and back into the very jaws of the next boat, whilst the long sweeping stroke of their intended victims is gradually diminishing the distance between them and the Peterites.

Now is the cry of those that can cry and shout, and few indeed are they, Peter's, Luke's, the Saints, having long since disappeared ere the long bridges were attained. Again the boats proceed to cross to the Abingdon shore, and the dense crowd in the meadow and on the boat-houses, catching a glimpse of the race, adds its roar to the tumult. As the entrance of the Cherwell is neared, the cries cease

entirely, most of the runners requiring all their breath to continue the race, and such as have some portion to spare, being too excited to express their feelings. The distance between the rivals—for to the two leading boats the race is now confined—is now but a couple of yards; the *Cherwell* is close at hand, the all-important red flag just in sight. Not a word is heard. There sits Davis as cool as if miles away from all racing. The coxswain of the *Peterites* has tried every manœuvre, now jibbing his rudder, now throwing the back-water on the bow of the approaching boat—all seems useless; slowly, but to all appearances surely, the sharp nose of the *St. Luke's* comes on. The *Cherwell* is gained, and the deed is not yet done—another minute, and the *Peterites* will be up to the red flag, and then all is lost. As the stern of the leading boat passed the city bank of the little *Cherwell*, every one who was near could hear Tom Davis say the magic word, “Now!” As the word was uttered, the *Lukian* cutter seemed to dart, as the hound from the leash, and ere the word was well finished the rudder of the *St. Peter's* cutter was nearly split in twain—the deed was done.

As amid the enthusiastic cheering of the dense crowd that now lined both banks of the river, the successful *Lukites* pulled leisurely by the conquered invincibles, Spencer's attention was attracted to a small party that occupied a heavy passage punt, moored off the *Christ-church* meadows. It was Hamilton and his party; his mother, his aged father, and his fair sister Margaret. On the extreme edge of the punt stood the excited girl, bending over the water to catch a glimpse of the approaching cutters. Another punt, crowded with men, hurriedly pushed off from the opposite shore, carried by the stream, struck the end of the one in which the *Hamiltons* were standing, and in a moment Margaret had lost her balance, and with a faint scream fell headlong into the water, striking her head in her fall against the blade of Spencer's oar, as he pulled leisurely towards the boat-house.

Rapidly did the half-senseless girl sink to the bottom of the stream, but not more rapidly than was the maddened spring with which our hero leapt from his seat, and dropping his oar into the water plunged in after Margaret.

To seize the sinking girl by her flowing dress, to raise her in his arms, and bear her to the boat-house, was the work of but a few minutes; and whether from the slight nature of the blow, or the reviving effects of the cold stream, Margaret soon recovered to see her preserver sink on the ground in strong convulsions.

The sudden plunge in the cool stream when every pore of his body was opened with the violence of his exercise, had been too much for the strong frame of our hero. First came cold shiverings, the precursors of overpowering attacks of heat, giddiness in the head, tremulous weakness of the limbs, and at last the strong convulsive fit in which he sank before the rescued Margaret.

In consequence of the dangerous nature of the attack, Gerard would not permit our hero to be carried to the college, rightly deeming that no care can equal that of ladies when sickness is preying on the frame of suffering man.

In less than an hour after the accident, Margaret's chamber had been converted into the sick room of our delirious hero.

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D.D.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Chace.

"L' inimico a seguirne ebbe due piedi
E noi quattro a fuggir, come tu vedi."

"Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With post-boy scampering in the rear,
They raised the hue and cry.
'Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!—
No one of them was mute;
And all and each that passed that way
Did join in the pursuit."

FEW districts in Italy—and if not there, I should like to know in what other country of the known world—have been more bountifully dealt with by nature than that long strip of land that lies between the Apennines and the Po down to the Adriatic, and which, from the old Roman road that traverses it in all its length, derived its classical name of *Emilia*. It embraces both the duchies of Parma and Modena, as well as the northern provinces of the Papal states, and was the main theatre of those revolutionary vicissitudes of 1831 which I have taken upon myself to record.

The Cispadane region, or Emilia, has, then, all the fertility without the flatness and sameness of the opposite or Transpadane Lombardy. The verdant ridges of the distant Apennine chain branch out in every direction, gracefully sloping downwards with endless variety to the main road. Those ancient subduers of the earth, no less than of its inhabitants, the Romans, drove their military highway right at the foot of the lowest hills, over the swampy ground which they rescued from the inundation of lawless streams. Upon those marshes, at the distance of ten, twelve or fifteen miles from each other, their infant colonies arose. Each colony, by turns, became a thriving and populous city, and the day has been when each of those cities constituted an independent and flourishing state. Their power and glory, as well as their freedom, have set long since; but Nature, ever true to herself, continued to lavish her gifts with unbounded luxuriance; and the population, whom either war or commercial enterprise had tended to condense and confine within their town-walls, have, in days of comparative security, gradually gone back to the soil, whose sources remained still inexhaustible, and spread over the land, clustering in hamlets and villages, especially all along the main road, so that the interval between town and town has often the appearance of a prolonged suburb.

These remarks chiefly apply to that part of the Emilian way I was now travelling through, bound, as the reader may perhaps recollect, on my exploring expedition to Reggio. Rich and fertile as our own Parmese lands may be said to be, they are little better than a desert when compared with the hills and plains of the neighbouring territory. I had now crossed the bridge of the Enza, at the distance of five

miles from our metropolis, and at St. Ilario, a little village on the plain, had set my foot on what the Duke of Modena rather emphatically calls his "Dominii Estensi." At every step, as I proceeded, the green of the meadows seemed to become a few shades deeper, the grass grew denser, and the timber shot up more boldly and majestically aloft. An air of greater comfort and plenty diffused itself over the land: the whitewashed cottages, most of them built immediately by the road-side, were kept in excellent trim; the ark-like populousness and pretty confusion of the poultry-yards, the hugeness and sleekness of the horned cattle, and the glowing eye, the bronze-coloured cheeks of the open-mouthed rustics, soon made me aware that I was riding over the very fat of the land. Whether tenanted or not, every cottage door was invitingly thrown open; and though the huge oak-branch hanging on almost every third door is generally understood as the emblem of an inn or wine cellar, yet hospitality is nowhere perhaps of a less venal description than in this region, where the labourer, blessed with God's bounties far above his wants, and placed in an absolute political impossibility of turning them to any commercial purpose, must be willing to share them with every one who applies to him in the Giver's name. And this must, to a certain degree, account for that infinite number of mendicants who prove such a plague to our foreign visitors, and have reflected so much disgrace upon the country, but which, in fact, ought to be looked upon as the best argument in favour of the inexhaustible fertility of a land, the operative part of whose population can, without inconvenience, maintain the other half in idleness and beggary.

Behind the cottages, behind the fence of their gardens, the grounds immediately rise. From that first gentle, almost imperceptible swell of the land, to the highest crest of the Apennine, for a long track of forty or fifty miles, it is only a slow, gradual, almost unbroken acclivity. Here and there, where occasionally the descent of a mountain torrent lays a larger extent of country open to the view, the eye can almost embrace the whole range of the hills, from the first vine-clad undulations bordering upon the road, upward to the cloud-hooded summit of Mount Cimone, rising more than four thousand feet above the level of the Mediterranean. It is a vast and sublime spectacle, and the picturesque ruins of numerous castles, rising bare and bleak on the brows of apparently inaccessible cliffs, add at every turning of the road a fresh interest to the enrapturing scene. Each of those spectre-like remnants of feudalism teems with the memorials of the past—not with some obscure, superstitious legends, such as illustrate the hawk-nest of a German baron on the Rhine, or the rude dwelling of a highland chieftain near Loch Lomond—but with ever-verdant records of heroes whose names are familiar to all who read, whose undying fame shall endure when the very corner-stone of those massive piles shall be erased from the face of the land. There, in a deep, narrow dell, lie the cumbrous ruins of the Castle of Guardasone, with its *Guardiola*, or watch-tower, on the neighbouring hill; not far is Montechiaro, with its four white battlemented turrets, as light, bright, and gay as fairy-work. From these castles, five hundred years ago, issued, followed by their mailed partizans, Piero de Rossi on one side, and Azzo da Correggio on the other, to dye the plain with the best blood of the

land—the one the noblest warrior, the other the most accomplished lord of his age, the friend and host of Petrarch, whose peaceful retreat lies down yonder in that silent valley of *Selva Piana*, where the ploughman will still show you the poet's cottage and his favourite walk. Opposite, on the other bank of the Enza, you may see Canossa, Rossena, and the other *Quattro Castelli*, the tenements of the high-souled countess Matilda, whose sway extended over the whole of the Tuscan Apennines. Canossa, her favourite residence, after nearly eight centuries, still stands sound and entire. On the broad flagstones of that castle's court-yard there knelt once, for three days and three dreary winter nights, one of the proudest German Cæsars, suing in vain for a reconciliation with a still prouder Roman pontiff. Three days and three nights did the stubborn priest remain in the castle-hall, equally deaf to the supplications of the humbled monarch, and to the remonstrances and solicitations of his noble hostess. At last the kaiser was admitted into the pontifical presence; he threw himself on the ground before him to kiss the sandal of the fisherman's successor;—the inexorable priest laid his foot on the anointed head of the prostrated man, exulting at a victory which gave the altar such an unbounded ascendancy over the throne.

Not many miles farther, hidden among the vines, the juice of whose grapes is so deservedly famous in Italy, you find the castle of Matteo Maria Boiardo, count of Scandiano, the Don Quixote as well as the Cervantes of Italy. Here the noble bard found shelter against the cares of courtly life. Among the tenants of these fair domains, you find still descendants of those good peasants with whose high-sounding names the poet was pleased to baptize his Mandricardo, Gradasso, Sobrino, and the other heroes of his "*Orlando*." It was in these groves that, whilst hunting one day, the name of his most tremendous pagan knight, Rodomonte, occurred to his thoughts. Soon giving his horse the spur, and crying out *Eureka* with all the might of his voice, he galloped back to his castle, ordered the bells to be rung and the cannons fired, as if for the canonization of a new saint, to the great surprise and dismay of the rustics, who wondered what new madness had seized their eccentric landlord. Vast and mighty as the fancy of the bard of Scandiano may be, we cannot say, "*non surrexit major*," for, only a few years later, only at a few miles' distance, there was born a man whose reputation was almost entirely to eclipse his own, and who, whilst aiming to re-model and complete Boiardo's wide undertaking, was to cast his predecessor far into the shade. On the entrance of a humble house near the citadel of Reggio, you may still read the inscription, "*Qui natus Ludovico Ariosto*."

I have designedly lingered on the road, only to make my readers aware that there are more interesting spots in our dear, noble Italy, than are generally dreamt of by foreign tourists. Here, in a ride of a few miles, and scarcely ever deviating from a well-travelled main road, I have been able to point out such shrines of bygone glory, such monuments of ancient valour and genius, as may well repay the attention that any intelligent traveller would bestow upon them. But your tourist, especially your English tourist, is an imitative creature, that seldom or never ventures one step out of the beaten track. For

him there is no Italy out of the tottering palaces of Venice, or of the mouldering walls of the Coliseum. What does he know of the Emilia, unless it be the Bologna sausages and Parmesan cheese? Himself gifted with very little discrimination or sense of the beautiful, he is a perpetual echo of the opinions of his predecessors. Byron told him to sigh on the "Bridge of Sighs," to stare at the "Venus that loves in stone;"—his journey is traced out by Mariana Starke to a minute and to a penny;—at Naples, the *Veglione* and the shower of sugar-plums; at Rome, the *Girandola* and the mummeries of passion week. Really John Bull, so sensible a creature at home, is little better than a grown child abroad. His types of the Italian character are the half-naked lazzaroni that crowd and harass him on the Molo at Naples, and among whom he flings a handful of *grani*, to enjoy the fun of setting them by the ears, or to see them swallow a yard of macaroni at one breath. He has no will, no taste of his own. He never sets his foot beyond the boundaries of English Italy, the most hackneyed, corrupted, and irreclaimably dead part of the country. Were I to take a party of enterprising discoverers on a trip along our sublime Apennines, were I to show with how much of Italian scenery, manners, and costumes they are still utterly unacquainted—

But no, by Heaven, better no! Never let foreign gold, luxuries, and corruption, penetrate the *terra incognita* of these innocent valleys: for, if you complain of the blighting influence of continental manners on English morals, the charge brought against the example set to our people by English and other foreigners residing among us, is neither less loud, nor, perhaps, less well-grounded and just. Certainly, the difference between the favourite haunts of fashionable foreign idlers, and the districts hitherto secure against their invasions, is sufficiently striking; and if I were to affirm that I have lived in villages where no cottage-barn or stable-door is shut up either by day or night—where neither fields nor vineyards were ever walled or fenced—where "all that apparatus of men and things which they call justice," scarcely ever makes its appearance, because scarcely ever needed—where even the most absurd half-pagan superstitions of Catholicism assume a harmless and holy character—where theft and murder are hardly ever heard of—adultery and irreligion as utterly unknown as in ancient Sparta,—I fear that I could meet with no belief in this country; and as, for a considerable part, the scene of my juvenile exploits lay among these remote and unexplored regions, this true and conscientious narrative must have all the appearance of an improbable fiction.

But to our tale. I had stopped at the *Albergo della Posta* at St. Ilario, and giving my own good charger to the keeping of mine host, I mounted one of the lean but swift post-horses, and was consequently followed by one of the equally lean post-boys, without whose escort no traveller is trusted with any horse or other conveyance belonging to the establishment.

The boy—whom I immediately dignified into a squire—the *boy* was a veteran soldier, who, after having followed Napoleon's armies to Russia and Germany, had offered himself as a postilion to the *Locandiere* of his native village, till his hair had been blanched and his shoulders vaulted in his service.

He was, on that road, a well-known and a popular personage, and, as such, he would fain have claimed the privilege of riding side-by-side with his employer, entertaining him with his twice-fought battles of the Raab and the Beresina; but seeing he had to deal with a romantic, and therefore an unmanageable customer—an admirer of silence and scenery—he left me to the company of my thoughts, and, dropping behind, engaged in a desultory conversation with the comely housewives and tidy house-maidens who stood singing and spinning at the door of most cottages, and who never failed to bestow a ready smile and a good-humoured “*buon giorno*” on the lonely wayfarer.

We set out from St. Ilario, with all the honours of cracking whips and blowing horns, at a brisk, business-like trot, intended, I suppose, as a display of the speed and mettle of the steeds, and the smartness and elegance of the postilion, before the eyes of the astonished natives; but once out of sight, my conductor, at my request, slackened his pace, and we rode on cautiously and leisurely, both because I did not wish to venture into Reggio without previous knowledge of the state of things in that place, and because I wished to keep my horse's wind and strength unbroken for all unforeseen contingencies.

We arrived without any accident at the bridge of the Crostolo, a torrent that crosses the main road, at the distance of less than three miles from the gate of Reggio, when we overtook on our way a fat old priest, who was journeying in the same direction with us, mounted on a beautiful mule, which, lusty as she was, groaned under the clergyman's weight, like Charon's barge, loaded with living stock, in the sixth book of the *Æneid*.

“Good morning to you, Don Gaetano,” said I, guessing his name from his look. There is always a correspondence between a man's name and his outward appearance.

The priest started.

“You have no time to lose, I am thinking, if you wish to say mass before noon.”

The priest stared.

“They are very liberal, I am told, at the Duomo, and you would not, I am sure, give up your day's work for a *scudo*.”

The priest shook his head.

“You are a pretty young gentleman,” said he, and well informed about other people's concerns. “Yes,” he continued, dealing a smart blow on the mule's neck, “I must make haste, as you say, or I may be too late for the *Te Deum*.”

“The *Te Deum*!” I exclaimed. “What, to celebrate the Jesuits' expulsion from the dominions of Este?”

“To solemnize his highness's return into his states,” replied the priest, gravely and bitterly, “and to put an end to those scenes of tumult and scandal which young sparks like you called the constitution.”

It was now my turn to wince.

“Soh! your *Duchino* has come back, has he? Good tidings for the gentlemen of your cloth! And pray, did he march against his rebellious subjects at the head of a procession of monks?”

“He led his own battalions, and the troops of his august cousin, the emperor of Austria, whom Heaven in his mercy protect!”

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"Amen," said I, rather sulkily; "and may all the priests that pray for him, or for Francis of Modena, meet with the fate of Don Innocenzo Malerbi."

Don Innocenzo, a priest of great integrity and virtue, was condemned to death as a Carbonaro, and suffered with rare heroism at Modena, in 1821.

The priest looked at me with a smirk.

"I see you are an arrant brigand," quoth he, "but for all that we won't quarrel—and rot me, my dear fellow, if I would not rather say mass for the duke and emperor's souls than sing a *Te Deum* for their victory; but, hang it, why didn't ye hold out more stoutly? We country parsons were all in your favour. But we can't frighten back an Austrian regiment as we would exorcise a legion of devils; and, hang it, the *Te Deum* is to be a showy affair, and the alms are six *lire* (little above a shilling) a piece."

"It is a mighty temptation, to be sure," said I, who had good reasons to humour the notions of the selfish priest. "But," I added, "the Austrians; have you seen them? where are they? how many are they?"

"Have I seen them?" echoed the priest; "how should I, if they just took their quarters in the citadel this morning? But I have seen one of the cockaded young men from town, who had just cut his stick the moment the gate was closed, and the town put in a state of siege."

"The gate closed! and how, in the name of all wonders, do you expect to get in, then? you are no spirit or hobgoblin, meseemeth, that you may smuggle in through the key-hole."

"Ha! ha! you little know of the wonders that this collar and hat have power to operate. The Austrians are a pious and reverent race. No sooner had they settled in their new barracks, than they promulgated their orders for a universal thanksgiving, and invited all the ministers of the gospel to officiate."

"I see they are excellent customers, and their emperor is not called his apostolic majesty for nothing."

Here I shifted the subject: I talked about quails, beccaficos, roast chesnuts, and wine of Scandiano; I descanted on cookery with a connoisseurship which astonished myself no less than my good fellow-traveller: and the eyes of the reverend epicure glistened, and his mouth watered; he forgot both brigands and Austrians, the cathedral and the *Te Deum*, and we had hardly gone two miles before I had completely won his admiration and love.

Here we got in sight of the *Angelo*, a pretty suburban inn, the favourite resort of the Reggiani of a Sunday, renowned for its stews and ragouts, and especially for that favourite dish, at Milan and in all Lombardy the substitute for the Neapolitan macaroni—the *busecca* or tripes.

"Busecca, Don Gaetano!" I exclaimed "This is the house for tripes; and may I never behold that beloved dish smoking before me again, if I stir one step before I have tasted it under the 'angel's wings.'"

"Tripes are an excellent dish, as you say," echoed the priest, sighing wofully.

"Come," said I, pointing at the sun-dial, that was casting its monitory shade on the white-washed wall of the inn. "It is not gone twelve yet, and your *Te Deum*, you tell me, is ordered at three. Come! a dish of tripes is soon made up, and we will call for the landlord's oldest *Scandiano*."

The priest hesitated, but pulled in the reins. "I think," said he, "my mule will be glad of a few minutes' rest, and your horse, too, my brave youth, I am thinking; but hang me, (Don Gaetano seemed quite fond of that expression, though rather an uncouth one for a priest)—hang me if Bartoldo the innkeeper can give us such excellent *malvasia* as you will taste if you honour me at the rectory."

"A bargain, Don Gaetano!" cried I; "let us see what we can get at the Angel, and I promise to ride home with you for the evening."

The priest needed no further pressing: aided by the postboy and two of the waiters, he let himself down from his trusty mule, freed himself from the ample folds of his round mantle, threw it down with his tri-cornered hat on an old arm-chair on the entrance, and made his way, with the freedom and nonchalance of an *habitué*, into the little parlour, where he threw himself upon a sofa, puffing and blowing and fanning himself with his white handkerchief.

Our bustling landlord received us with more good-humour than ceremony, was rather prosy than eloquent in his eulogium of his wine and tripes, and, after as short a time as might be reasonably expected, returned with the *busecca* smoking in a pewter dish, and the *Scandiano* foaming in a flask, the neck of which was made in the shape of an inverted cone, and bore a close resemblance to the muzzle of a blunderbuss. And now my object was attained. The poor priest was sniffing the savoury dish before him, with scarcely good breeding enough to wait till I invited him to fall upon and help himself. Neither the orders of his bishops nor the pope's presence, nor perhaps thunder and earthquake and the roof tottering about his ears, would have had power to raise him from his seat, or divert his attention from the all-engrossing object on which his covetous eyes were riveted.

"Excuse me, Don Gaetano," said I, starting up suddenly, and walking to the window; "I must see what the devil is the matter with my horse. Help yourself, I beg, while the tripes are hot; I shall not be more than a minute."

Saying which, and without waiting for an answer, I darted from the room, snatched up the priest's hat and cloak as I went through the hall, and laying hold of my horse's rein (the postilion was in the kitchen toasting his cheese, and playing his antics with the buxom landlady,) and mounting in haste, I rode stealthily away. The priest's mantle was so very long and large, that when I buttoned it round my neck its wide skirts fell down beyond my heels and stirrups, and so completely hid me and my horse, that, as Dante has it,

"N'andavan due sotto una cappa."

The tricornered hat was also of ample dimensions, and as I quashed it down to my brow, my face was so completely overshadowed by its brim, that the disguise was complete, and I was, to all intents and

purposes, as thorough a priest as one might meet anywhere between the Alps and the sea.

In this plight I arrived before the gate of Reggio, and as no time runs swifter than what is employed at table, it is most likely that Don Gaetano never missed either me or his garment, and that no alarm was given before the thief was comfortably out of sight.

Reggio is a nice, neat, cheerful town, with fifteen or seventeen thousand inhabitants, with broad and clean but ill-paved streets, few buildings of taste or importance, but famous in the north of Italy for its annual fair, which, during the month of May, attracts hundreds and thousands from all the neighbouring cities. The Reggiani are distinguished among their Lombard brethren by their warm and noisy, uncouth and hardy character, which might win them the appellation of the Irish of Italy. They are on the whole well liked by their neighbours, with the exception of the Modenese, who, beside their ancient republican rivalries, are, indeed, as different from the Reggiani in habits, manners, and fastings, as the grave even-tempered English may well be from the gay and careless people of the sister island. Even in the days of Ariosto, the two towns were distinguished by the different appellations of

“ Reggio giocondo, e Modena feroce,”

and the *sobriquet* of *Teste quadre*, or *square-headed people*, dates as far back as the days of the *Secchia Rapita*, when Tarsoni, himself a Modenese, relates at full length by what mishap the heads of the poor warriors of Reggio were flattened by the halbert of Mars, and assumed that shape, which continued to distinguish their descendants down to the present generations.

Round or square, however, the heads of the Reggiani have in many instances proved to be among the soundest and cleverest in Italy; and as the mercurial and sulphureous temper of that people is apt to lead them into all sorts of scrapes, and make them eagerly desirous of novelty, they have in all times taken the lead in all Italian commotions; and especially during the French inroads, in the age of Napoleon, the town itself, and many of its enterprising inhabitants, have played a most conspicuous part, several of them even rising to the highest degree of power and fame.

Crushed, but not subdued, by the iron rule of Francis IV. of Modena, after the restoration of 1815, the Reggiani have, in every instance, given the most unequivocal marks of disaffection and rebelliousness. In 1821, the whole town, priests, monks, Jews, and all, were Carbonari; and however their ranks might have been thinned and their boldness damaged by the severe and sanguinary executions with which their disloyalty was visited, still a sufficient number of old and a whole generation of new conspirators remained, to play the devil at the epoch of Francis IV.'s desertion of his states in 1831. From the fourth of February to the fifth of March there was but one noisy, drunken carnival at Reggio, and the thoughtless revelry with which these good townsmen celebrated their sudden enfranchisement, admirably contrasted with the staid and anxious demeanour of their

neighbours and rivals of Modena, who, although gifted with no less courage, and perhaps more determination, still evinced less sanguineness, and seemed haunted by the darkest forebodings, and who, besides their cheerless anticipations of the future; had recent calamities—the imprisonment of *Ciro Menotti*, and thirty other of their most distinguished citizens—to deplore.

Meanwhile the battle of *Fiorenzola* had shaken their belief in the inviolability of the non-intervention compact. The dispositions of their generalissimo *Zucchi*, a native of *Reggio*, and the timid and evasive measures of their provisional government, had gradually spread a chilling influence over their spirits, and prepared them for the final catastrophe which was to bring back his highness *Francis IV.*, and a long epoch of retributive desolation and terror. The most peaceful and helpless part of the population had already been wrought into submission. The youthful and ardent, the *compromessi*, had either already migrated to the neighbouring *Romagna*, or had been enlisted into a regular militia, which was kept ready to march from the enemy at the first appearance of danger.

On the fifth of March the little army of the Duke of Modena—those twelve or fifteen hundred men whom it will be remembered he had taken along with him into Austrian Lombardy in the first panic of an insurrection at *Bologna*—crossed the *Po* as the vanguard of a strong body of Austrian regiments, and directed the attack against *Novi*. That little town was garrisoned by about sixty volunteers from Modena and *Reggio*, at the head of whom was that daring *Rolandi* whom the reader may recollect to have met at *Bruscello*, and whose eventful story was given in the occurrence of my excursion to *Guastalla*, and the memorable arrest of its bishop.

That able and undaunted leader, skilled in every manner of warfare, having selected a favourable position and infused his own noble spirit into the hearts of his few followers, awaited the arrival of the ducal troops with admirable coolness. To their eternal infamy be it said, the regiment of *Este*, unmindful of the hundred loaves of dark bread with which they had been fed in his highness's service, in return for which, indeed, they had hardly ever before been pressed into active duty, forgetting that their sovereign's eyes were fixed upon them, that bountiful, liberal prince, in whose presence there had been no end to their boasting and bragging,—they, whose numbers were hundreds and thousands, who since many years had the *Pas ordinaire* and *Pas accéléré* and *Pas de charge* by heart, seemed now to have been trained to no other manœuvre than that of a hasty retreat, and gave way,—ay! actually turned their backs and ran before threescore undisciplined young riflemen, when scarcely a few random shots had been interchanged.

The fugitives fell back on the main body of their Austrian allies, who advanced with great leisure and order, a large body of five thousand men. *Rolandi* sent messenger upon messenger to Modena for reinforcements. The Modenese government sent orders after orders for his immediate retreat; and the brave patriot, seeing the stark madness of sacrificing the lives of his devoted followers in such a

desperate contest, was finally compelled to comply with his rulers' wish.

Here the orders for a general retreat were given. The *compromessi* of Modena and Reggio, amounting to some nine hundred, well armed and equipped, and followed by their provisional government with their families—for even women and children could not be left to the mercy of such a tyrant as Francis of Modena—bade a sorry farewell to their native homes, and departed in order and silence towards Bologna.

Scarcely had they disappeared from the eastern gate, when the invading troops advanced from the north. The revolutionary standards were struck down—with the exception, indeed, of the great *Gonfalone* on the top of the *Ghirlandina*, which was so far near the sky as to be almost hidden among the clouds and forgotten, and continued to wave triumphantly aloft, even when the blue and black eagles of Este and Austria had occupied all the minor eminences around.

The invaders entered into a silent and apparently uninhabited town; shops and windows, churches and taverns, were alike shut up, and the almost midnight stillness which prevailed was strangely contrasted with the glare of the noontide sun.

The order of march had been inverted since the disaster of Novi. The duke and his useless soldiers were sent to the rear-guard, and entered last into their reconquered metropolis. As his highness's carriage drove up to the door of his magnificent marble palace, the Hungarian bands sent forth their strains of victory. After a few minutes of rest, Francis IV. repaired to the cathedral, ordered a *Te Deum* or thanksgiving to be sung in all churches, and almost in the same breath issued his warrants for the arrest of the leaders of the rebellion, gave verbal instructions to his *dragoni* or gendarmes, ordered a scaffold to be erected, and sent his own confessor—a rare honour—to Menotti, Borelli and others of his prisoners whom he had compelled to share his temporary exile, and whom he now dragged along with him in his triumphant march. Of these events, of which I have somewhat anticipated the narration for the benefit of my readers, we had but an imperfect and unsatisfactory knowledge at Parma, and it was precisely to get more authentic information that I offered myself for the venturous expedition in which I was now engaged.

That the Austrians were in possession of Reggio, and, consequently, of Modena and all the duchy also, there could no longer be any doubt after the conversation I had with my good fellow traveller just now left *tête-à-tête* with his tripe at the Angel Inn; but as our people had been sufficiently kept on the rack with confused and contradictory tidings for several days before, I was unwilling to go back with mere *on dits*, and was determined *coûte qui coûte*, to report what I had seen with my own eyes.

Even on that score I was speedily satisfied: as I drew near the gate, I descried the white uniforms of the Austrians on duty on the bridge, together with two of the duke's own myrmidons, who had alighted from and held their horses by the bridle. Prudence would

have suggested a timely retreat; but the desire of giving a more circumstantial account of the enemy's forces and intentions, of ascertaining whether these were really Austrians in flesh and bone, not, as it was bruited at Parma, mere ducal rascallions, mere asses under a lion's hide, so clad in order to overawe and dishearten the rebels by a mock show of Austrian co-operation—and, above all, the love of adventure and frolic too natural at the age of twenty, urged me to proceed, and put the protection of my disguise and the inviolability of my well-assumed priestly character to the test.

The gate was not indeed closed, but, as it is usual in time of siege, so left ajar as to admit a horseman or even a carriage, but under the immediate inspection of the gatekeeper, who, backed as he was by strong body of soldiers, might have banged it in the face of any unwelcome intruder in the twinkling of an eye.

The town being in a state of siege, no one could leave without a special passport, and no stranger could, under any pretext, be admitted. Still, as Don Gaetano had sensibly observed, exceptions would be made in favour of my *cloth*. The Austrian sentinels, in fact, respectfully drew back to make way as I drew near, and even the Modenese dragoons, though they could not help staring at the trapping of my post-horse with some curiosity, still raised their hands to their chacko, and honoured me with their military salute.

So in I was, and, full of glee at the success of my scheme, I rode on boldly towards the square, little caring to revolve in my mind the great problem—how to get safely out again.

The gay town of Reggio was plunged into consternation and mourning. Not a soul was to be seen: the clang of my horse's hoofs sounded as hollow and dismal as if on the streets of Pompeii. As I drew near the square, however, I was surrounded by a crowd walking in my own direction. On the square I found Austrians, cannon, and other instruments of destruction.

These soldiers were Austrians indeed. Had I even been blind and deaf, had I neither seen their round unmeaning faces, had I not heard their harsh guttural accent, the blood that boiled in my veins would have made me aware of their presence.

The attention of the people was attracted by a large *placard*, stuck up at the door of the Town Hall. I alighted from my horse, and trusting it to the care of a boy, who, unable to read, seemed less anxious to press forward with his neighbours, I dashed through the crowd, and forcing my way to the foremost ranks, I read the following

“*Proclamation.*”

“We Francis IV., by the grace of God, Duke, &c., having by the aid of an all-merciful Providence, as also with the help of our brave troops, and those of our august ally the Emperor of Austria——”

I read no more, but, stretching forth my hands seized, the still moist paper, and tore it down from the wall.

There have been several instances in my life—I suppose every man might say the same of himself—when, especially in my younger days, my body seemed to act not only without consent, but even with perfect unconsciousness of the soul. Blows have I dealt, and words have I uttered, under the immediate mechanic impulse of mere bo-

dily passion, which I have wished undealt or unsaid for the rest of my life.

Still, never did my body play me such an extraordinary prank, never was any of its whims more unaccountable or irresistible than that which I am now relating. The idea of offering so gross an insult to the majesty of the Duke of Modena never had darted across my brain. Had it ever entered into my head, had the devil ever suggested it, the temptation would have been spurned as leading to nothing short of utter destruction.

And yet, though never resolved upon, the deed was done, and there I stood, perfectly unconscious, till one of the police officers laid his hand on my shoulder, crying out, "Arrest the traitor!" Then I awoke from my trance, I bounded on the hapless policeman and knocked him down; then rumpling the paper and thrusting it in my bosom, I broke through the still wondering crowd, jumped on my horse, and rode away.

"Stop thief, stop thief!" roared the policeman, rising from the ground, and hastening after me. The people followed in a crowd—stop thief!—The fatal cry had its wonted effect; at every turning of the road the train of my pursuers increased. Still I was mounted, and as my horse, almost instinctively, retraced its former steps, I soon arrived in sight of the gate.

At the first cry of alarm, the Austrian guards rushed forward and crossed their bayonets; but seeing only a priest trotting from a disorderly rabble as fast as his nag would carry him, they fancied that the noise arose from some popular tumult, and making way for my horse and me, they fired a few shots against my pursuers.

The crowd waited for no other compliment, but immediately dispersed. The policeman advanced fearlessly alone, but, before he had time to enter into any explanation, I flew past the gate and bridge, and was soon beyond reach of the fire. The two ducal dragoons, however, were not slow in taking to their horses and plunging after me; but, with the start of a few minutes, the chances were widely in my favour.

My steed, who, during perhaps twenty years of life, scarcely knew any other pace but its everlasting trot, could not well understand my meaning, as I mercilessly plunged my rowels into its sides; by dint of pricking and flogging, however, I soon made it mend its pace, and as it was naturally a swift animal, as long as it had only to contend against the heavy chargers of the dragoons, I might depend on its winning the race.

Away, away we went on the smoothly macadamized road, like the three wild huntsmen driven by whirlwind and storm. As we darted by the Angel Inn, I descried my good friend Don Gaetano, who stood by the window, screaming and gesticulating like one possessed. I freed myself from my disguise, and dropping hat and cloak, I left to the care of the winds the charge of carrying them to the feet of their owner. The postboy, who had already mounted and was wondering what had become of his customer, seeing me running so desperately, with my long hair streaming in the wind, rushed after me, crying, for Heaven's sake, that I should mind what I was about, and not kill his master's best horse.

But I seemed resolved to put his master's horse to the trial. On their part, the dragoons were unwilling to give up the chase. There I saw them, whenever I turned, not a hundred rods in the wake, whipping and swearing with right good will.

Had our ride been as long as that of Dick Turpin, from Kilburn to York, I have little doubt but the strength of their stout war-houses would have finally prevailed. But I was well determined that this should never be, till the animal I rode should drop down dead on the road.

Away! away! all the cottages poured forth their tenants, every pedestrian stopped leaning on his staff, every driver pulled in his rein to witness the mad race. No one, however, dared to interfere with us, or those that were disposed to throw themselves on my path, luckily enough, thought of it only when it was too late. The idea that I had a pair of loaded pistols never flashed across my mind; neither were my pursuers aware that they might have tried whether a bullet from one of their carbines might not have outstripped my courser.

Away! away! it was neck or nothing; and I had no leisure to look at the scenery. Behind remained Scandiano,—behind Canossa, Rossena, and even St. Ilario. The dragoons never pulled up till we were in sight of the bridge of the Enza, and the appearance of the sentinels at our outposts made them aware that the odds were no longer on their side.

Without giving much breathing time to my horse, I proceeded directly to Parma, and safe and sound, though minus a hat, I made my appearance before our provisional government, presenting to them my hard-won booty—the half-torn proclamation of Francis of Modena.

The tidings I brought were as decisive as they were dismal and ominous. There we were, alone and defenceless, with little hope of effectual resistance or honourable retreat. Our rulers came to a final resolution. Orders were issued that all who loved their country, and all those who considered themselves as *compromessi*, should meet on the morrow at the citadel, where all our forces should be called together, and an attempt should be made to join our brothers in Romagna, forcing our way along the ridge of the Modenese Apennine.

The morning, unlike what we had seen for the last two months, arose overcast and gloomy. At ten o'clock I presented myself at the citadel, and found about ten or eleven hundred of our young volunteers assembled. They were armed and equipped with the most scrupulous care, divided into bands of sixty each, under the command of officers chosen on the spot. I belonged to the vanguard, which marched under the guidance of Count Berardi.

Meanwhile much time had been lost; it was past three o'clock when the signal of departure was given. The national guard was to march first; the regular troops, with the artillery and the government, bringing up the rear a few hours afterwards.

And now there were embracing, and kissing, and shedding of tears; mothers, sisters, and mistresses were torn from their young friends' necks, and the column started.

On that very instant, as if it had waited with us for the "marche," a tremendous hail and thunder storm broke upon our heads.

AUTO-BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.¹

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

It was at the time the Ettrick Shepherd paid his memorable visit to London, at the commencement of 1832, that he published the "Old Highlander's Tale," which forms so interesting an episode to the "History of Thomas Drummond of Biddick." It was truly gratifying to witness the cordial welcome which he received in the great metropolis. He was invited, run after, and flatteringly noticed, both in the literary and aristocratic circles; and when the day of Burns's anniversary came round, it will be remembered that the opportunity of the gifted Shepherd's presence in London was eagerly seized, to make the celebration a joint one to him and the departed bard. There was a peculiar and an obvious appropriateness in this, as, by a singular coincidence, it was the 25th of January which gave birth to both those sons of genius. When the dinner took place in the Freemasons' Hall, the Shepherd himself alluded to this coincidence with great apparent satisfaction, and humorously called in the intervention of the "Brownie of Bodsbeck" on the occasion of his birth, in the admirable and characteristic speech which he made on his health being proposed from the chair by Sir John Malcolm. Never shall I forget the spontaneous burst of enthusiasm with which the toast was received. "The Memory of Robert Burns" was of course drunk in solemn silence; and it seemed as though the company were disposed to indemnify themselves for this necessary forbearance by the length and loudness of their acclamations in honour of the living poet. The spacious hall literally shook and rang with the tribute of the crowded assemblage to his genius and his worth; nor was it in any sense thrown away. It opened the Shepherd's heart and unlocked his lips with magical effect. With a face beaming with intelligence and goodness, he rose to express his thanks; and poured out his overflowing feelings in a strain of simple and natural eloquence, to which I listened with admiration and delight.

Mr. Crawford, being one of the committee and stewards upon the occasion, placed me with another lady, a friend of ours, in an advantageous position in the gallery, where we could see and hear all that passed. Both the sons of Burns were present; they on the chairman's left hand, and the Ettrick Shepherd on his right; and exactly before the chair stood the celebrated punch-bowl* of the departed

¹ Continued from vol. xxxi. p. 224.

* "Burns himself was a most hospitable and convivial man. His famous punch-bowl, while he resided at Ellisland, was frequently filled to his own satisfaction, and emptied to the delight of his friends. After his death, it was presented to Alexander Cunningham, of Edinburgh, by the poet's family, as a mark of esteem and gratitude. Cunningham went the way of the poet, and the bowl passed from beneath the auctioneer's hammer, at the price of eighty pounds, into the hands of a speculating tavern-keeper, and from thence into the pawnshop; out of which place it was redeemed, at more than the original cost, by my friend Archibald Hastie, Esq. of West-

bard, filled with the liquor "which in life he loved." It may be remembered by some of my readers, that a circumstance occurred which interrupted for a few minutes the festivity of the meeting, although it enhanced the compliment to the Shepherd himself. The numbers who crowded to the festival, anxious to see and do honour to him, far exceeded all anticipation; and, unfortunately for the comfort and accommodation of the company, upwards of a hundred and fifty persons were allowed to take tickets at the bar, and to pass to the hall, at the very last moment, (several even after the dinner had commenced,) without the knowledge of the committee, and contrary to their express regulations. Some extra provision had of course been made, but nothing at all adequate to this unexpected overflow of visitors. The natural consequence was, that the additional table, hastily set out for the supernumerary guests, was more scantily furnished than the rest, which gave rise to a good deal of grumbling and dissatisfaction on that side, "*the extrême gauche*" of the hall, mingled with a discordant din and clatter of sinecure knives and forks, and empty platters upon the vacant board. After a considerable delay, some hastily cooked dishes were eked out by partial contributions from the other tables, and the late comers were happily restored to some degree of good-humour before the intellectual treat of the night began. A few, however, could not possibly enjoy the latter, for want of that more solid foundation on which their peculiar temperament perhaps required it to rest; and accordingly two or three letters of complaint and lamentation appeared in the journals immediately afterwards, which occasioned some discussion and much laughter at the time. The dissatisfied parties (as is too often the case) had evidently never reflected that they themselves were alone to blame. Had they obtained their tickets in proper time, agreeably to the arrangement of the committee, which limited the period of application to the preceding day, of course due preparation would have been made by the proprietor of the tavern. Not choosing to be turned back at the eleventh hour, they walked into the dining-hall as they would have walked into a theatre, and found the practical difference between the two species of entertainment, and the modes of providing them.

I was much pleased with the speech which Mr. Lockhart made, in acknowledging the toast of Sir Walter Scott, his illustrious father-in-law, who was at that time wandering upon the continent in search of that health which, unhappily, he never recovered. Mr. Lockhart's address was highly interesting, and full of appropriate anecdotes felicitously told. But the speech of the night which appeared, in my humble judgment, to be the most truly eloquent, was that of the gallant and accomplished Sir George Murray. I was forcibly reminded by it of what I had read of him in the *Noctes*, a short time previously. "He speaks, by-the-bye," observed Tickler, "as well as if he had

place, London. I am glad that it has at last found sanctuary with one who, while he watches over it as a zealous Catholic would watch over the 'true bloody stone of Thomas-a-Becket,' submits it cheerfully at set times and seasons to the curiosity of his friends, reeking to the brim with the fragrant liquid which its first great owner loved. The bowl is made of black Scottish marble, brimmed and bottomed with silver."—*Songs of Scotland*, by Allan Cunningham, 4, 141.

never had another trade." "Peradventure better," responded North.

I have always been a great admirer of the songs of Burns, and had frequently heard from friends, on whose taste and judgment I could rely, of the peculiar beauty and pathos of Broadhurst's style of singing "John Anderson," one of the happiest of the bard's lyrics; but I never had the opportunity of hearing it before this evening. I was not aware that such a gratification awaited me; and certainly if I had heard nothing else, I should not have regretted my coming to town on the occasion. The singer had not completed the first stanza before I perceived that he had entered into the inmost spirit of the author. He gave the words in a style of the most touching simplicity, and breathed into them the very soul of tenderness. A hush of every other sound pervaded the hall, until the last note died upon the ear. It is much to be lamented that a foreign style of singing and foreign singers should be so much encouraged, to the prejudice of our native talent. I am almost afraid, in these days of refinement and affectation, to hazard such an opinion: but I am contented to think, that although mere fashion may for a time supersede taste, they are still two very different things, and have no necessary connexion with each other. I cannot, for my own part, understand why that which is merely wonderful or difficult, should so frequently be preferred to that which is natural and beautiful. Many things are wonderful, at the same time that they are absurd and out of place; and those canons of criticism which are applied to music would not be tolerated in the drama. Suffice it to say, that those who have not heard Broadhurst sing "John Anderson," have something yet to hear that is well worth the hearing.

Broadhurst! I ken thy modesty would spare
 This votive offering to thy powers of song;
 And thou hast had of praise too large a share,
 To heed the meanest of the minstrel throng:
 Yet must I tell, though but to tuneful winds,
 The magic sweetness of that silver tone,
 That with harmonious clue the labyrinth finds
 Of human feeling. Yes, to thee, we own,
 The *soul* does homage. I have heard the song
 Of our first Phæbus in the battle strain,
 Till glory fired the roused and kindling throng,
 And every pulse beat freedom: and again
 Heard him, like eastern nightingale among
 Its own bright roses, sing of love's sweet pain,
 Till tears upon the cheek of beauty hung,
 And lofty science stooped his starry brow
 To lips that seemed immortal as they sung!
 Yet purer, holier, are the thoughts that thou
 Awak'nest with thy voice. It seems to me
 As if some spirit of the blest were come
 From the bright fields of far eternity,
 To call my prison'd soul back to her home.
 I well remember when I heard thee first:
 Gay was the festival, and genius woke
 The harp of Coila, magical as erst,
 When Scotia's heaven-taught minstrel silence broke:

As from thy lips the sweet home-hallow'd strain
(Dear to the soul where pure affection clings,)
Came stealing on, my heart could not refrain
From the full gushing of its hidden springs.
O it were sweet, around the bed of death,
To hear such voice, of hope and pardon sing;
And upward borne with that melodious breath,
The parting soul essay her new-found wing:
For some such breathings from the *lost* and *blest*
Would give sweet passport to the land of rest.

A rather singular circumstance occurred to me, and the lady who was with me, on the evening in question. She had lost her husband about a year and a half previously, and she was still in mourning for him. She sat on my right hand, and some ladies who were on my left had vacated their seats shortly after the Ettrick Shepherd's speech. When next I turned my head in that direction, my attention was riveted to a gentleman, who, unperceived by us, had seated himself in the vacant space, at a short distance from me. In the surprise of the moment I almost thought that my friend's husband had risen from the grave. In dress, figure, face, expression, and manner, the resemblance was so complete, as to convey, for a few seconds, the impression of identity. When I drew my friend's attention to the stranger, she could hardly control her agitation. It was the more remarkable, that he paid not the slightest attention to what was going on in the hall below, but with his head reclining on his left hand, and his elbow resting on the front of the gallery, close to where we sat, he anxiously and intently fixed his gaze upon my friend, who (be it observed) was in the decline of life, and never had any pretensions to beauty. After the lapse of about a quarter of an hour, I found, on turning again in that direction, that he had gone as silently and unobservedly as he had entered. Had we seen this gentleman, whoever he might be, in some lonely chamber, or sequestered spot, I really think that my friend would have been disposed to set him down for a being of another world: but in a hall crowded with company, and echoing with noise and merriment, we were happily saved from rendering ourselves thus ridiculous. It being therefore impossible for me (notwithstanding the high authority of Shakspeare) to make a well-authenticated ghost-story out of such incongruous materials, I was forcibly led to the conclusion, that the strongest apparent resemblance should not too hastily be taken for positive identity. Indeed, there have been some well-known instances, in courts of justice, of the serious consequences which may arise from a want of due caution in this respect.

I never think of James Hogg but with feelings of the deepest interest and regret. So gifted, and yet so simple and warm-hearted,—in him the glowing fervour of the poetic temperament was chastened and hallowed by those breathings of the Christian spirit, which rendered the man as much greater than the poet, as the poet was superior to the whole brotherhood of money-getting, money-loving souls, with which our earth abounds. His merits as a writer, both of poetry and prose, are of the most extraordinary kind, as the difficulties with which his genius had to contend at the outset of life were immense.

Greatly as I admire Burns, who sprang from the same ranks as Hogg, the one a ploughman, the other a shepherd, I cannot but feel that the latter is by far the more surprising man of the two. The language of Burns has strength and energy, and often melts into pathos, but it is frequently rude and unpolished, the rhythm lame, and the rhymes still more defective. The diction of Hogg, on the contrary, is fervid, poetical, and elegant in a very high degree, and his versification harmonious and complete. Burns is wonderful as a ploughman; Hogg is admirable, not merely as a shepherd, but in the abstract. He does not claim or need any allowance on the score of his not having emerged into light from academic shades, but he proudly takes rank on Parnassus, side by side with those that have. It is this point which appears to me to be not always duly considered, in the qualified praise often bestowed upon Hogg, as "a wonderful Shepherd." He is likewise entirely free from that grossness into which Burns, unhappily, sometimes falls. Indeed, I remember to have heard an excellent critic declare, that in the whole range of Moore's earlier poetry, there was hardly anything to be found more sensual than are some of the songs of Burns.

I would not, if I could, rob the bard of Ayr, one of my earliest and greatest favourites, of a single one of those laurels which he earned so well: but justice to Hogg does not involve or imply the slightest disparagement of Burns. Each has his own peculiar merits; but I have always considered them to be of a very different kind, and in this opinion I am borne out by the authority of one wiser than myself. Professor Wilson says, "The truth ought always to be spoken; and therefore we say, that in fancy and imagination James Hogg—in spite of his name and his teeth—is superior to Robert Burns; and why not? The forest is a better school-room than ever Burns studied in; and it once overflowed with poetical traditions. But comparisons are always odious; and the great glory of James is, that he is as unlike Robert, as ever one poet was unlike another."

Again, when we consider that Hogg was taken from school (if he can properly be said ever to have been there at all) at so early an age as to have to acquire for himself, at a subsequent period, the art of writing, and almost the very elements of reading, by his own unassisted efforts, our admiration increases with the almost insurmountable difficulties under which he laboured, in contemplating his final success. Family misfortunes drove him from his home, and threw him in a great measure upon his own resources, when he was no more than seven years old! All the advantages which he had ever derived from schools, such as they were, were comprised within a space of about six months! Thus early he betook himself to the moors and mountains, first in the humble occupation of herding cows, (which he calls "the worst and lowest known in our country,") and some years afterwards in "the more honourable one of keeping sheep." Here this untutored child of genius "wandered at his own sweet will." Here, surrounded only by his mute companions, he learned to commune with Nature, and with his own heart, and to draw inspiration from the fountain-head. He was gifted with a soul which could appreciate the glorious works of the Divinity, to whose worship he raised the

anthem, and reared the altar, on the rude mountain-top, or in the deep bosom of the shadowy forest, while yet a boy. Here he had full and free scope for the expansion of his beautiful moral nature, and the developement of his high genius. Blessed with one of the warmest and purest hearts that ever beat within a human bosom, the very attitude of his mind was prayer, and his life was praise. His innate piety and love of God were intimately blended, as they ever must be, with every kindly feeling for his fellow men. What golden fruits the tree of genius bears, when planted in such a soil as this ! And what in truth is genius, but a withering curse, when the root that feeds, or rather starves it, lies in a cold and barren scepticism, and its kindred misanthropy ! How fatal for the possessor is, then, the dangerous gift ! How baneful for all those who unhappily come within its poisonous influence !

One cannot but lament, and that most deeply, that the high hopes which were held out to the Ettrick Shepherd on his visit to the metropolis were by no means afterwards realized. He was courted and complimented, feasted and flattered, and there the matter ended. He was suffered to return to his native hills, there to languish, in the midst of his helpless family, in poverty and neglect. His spirits and his strength gave way, and in a short time he sank under the accumulated weight of "life's oppressive load." In this his fate was too similar to that of his great precursor, Burns.*

While Hogg was in London he published the first volume of his *Altrive Tales*, with a *Memoir of his Life* prefixed. It is truly a work which must be ever read with interest and delight. So beautifully sincere and simple in speaking of himself, so frank in the avowal of his faults, so generous in the acknowledgment of benefits received, so overflowing with love and good-will to man,—who can resist the artless eloquence of those now silent lips ? He lays open the inmost recesses of his heart to the light of day, with the fearless confidence of one, who, habitually opening it to God, dreaded not the scrutiny of his fellow-mortals. The tales which he here published, and those which lie scattered through various periodicals, are likewise models of their kind.

Notwithstanding, however, the high merits of this volume, it did not meet with any adequate encouragement, and he never published a second. Great and grievous must his disappointment have been ; but it is painful, as it is useless, to dwell upon what is now past remedy. His widow and his children have, I rejoice to think, found a friend in the Duke of Buccleuch, who has granted them the occupation of a small farm, free from rent ; and the husband and father is himself beyond the reach of care. His emancipated spirit has now happily found its own more congenial home. There we may conceive that, with the rest of "the pure in heart," he now pours the sponta-

* Another of Scotland's gifted sons, Allan Cunningham, speaking of Burns, says, "During one year he enjoyed the friendship of the northern nobility, and for seven years he felt their neglect. During his visit to Edinburgh, he was caressed as no poet was ever caressed ; he expected this sunshine to last, and looked for fortune to follow ! but he was not prepared for disappointment, and his fortitude was not equal to his other powers. He sank, and died of a broken heart."

neous hymn, in some such divine melody as hung round his mortal lips, with the magic of holy inspiration.

Thus it is, that in this strange and inconsistent world of ours, genius is too often literally starved out of it, that it may be afterwards honoured with a marble bust and a crown of laurel. Miserable satisfaction this to the man that would gather a happy family group around a cheerful hearth! Some twenty years after Burns's death, the public began to bethink themselves of a monument to his memory! Some twenty years hence it is not improbable that the same empty tribute may be paid to the nobly-gifted and in every way excellent James Hogg.

While he was in London, I attempted to raise a warning note in his behalf, on the occasion of the festival. I sincerely wish that it had been attended to, as I lament that it unhappily turned out to be too prophetic. In taking my leave of this painful subject, I venture to subjoin the lines alluded to.

Genius! dear untutor'd child,
Singing to the desert wild,
Prank'd with every flower that grows;
Now with daisy, now with rose,
Wreathing thy fantastic curls;
Then with virgin crown of pearls,
Decking thy diviner lay,
Till the lightning radii play
Round thy lyre with dazzling ray;
Thou who didst with Milton soar,
Where no mortal reached before,—
Where the seraph's veiled eye
Speaks the thron'd Divinity;
Thou who by Avona's tide
Nursed fair Albion's elder pride,
Darling Shakspeare, Nature's heir;
Thou who on the banks of Ayr
Strung the harp of Coila's bard,
Smoothing all the strings that jarr'd,
From cold neglect or poverty;—
Whatsoe'er thy habit be,
Genius, let me dwell with thee.
Where thou wak'st the echoes round,
Let me tread the flow'ry ground;
By the silver winding stream,
Watch of setting sun the gleam,
Haunted glen, and rock of snow,
Kindling in the parting glow.
Where the flocks by Yarrow feed,
Sweetly sounds thy Doric reed;
ETTRICK'S gifted SHEPHERD there
Wanders, free as mountain air.
There entranced behold him lie,
Nature's book before his eye,
Nature's music in his heart,
Breathing from the world apart.
Inspiration wraps him now,
Lights his eye, and wreathes his brow;
Now with bright and buoyant wing,
See his golden fancy fling

Gems, that fall as thick as dew
Round his path of harebells blue.
Beauty with her radiant eye,—
Helm'd and crested chivalry,
Sportive fairies, knit in bands,
Dancing on the moonlight sands,—
All, obedient to his will,
Come the wizard's cup to fill ;
Which no sooner mortals drain,
Than they long to quaff again
Nectar, from the purest spring,
Touched by no unholy thing.
Nobles of fair Scotia's band,
Take a gifted brother's hand ;
Let the land that owns his lays
Give him more than empty praise ;
Shield him from the fate of BURNS,
Sport of want and woe by turns ;
Less had bred him heart's content,
Than mocked him with a monument !

THE AUTHOR'S WIFE.

BY MRS. HOWARD.

" It's a very bad day, but I must go to town—
But, because I am going, love, why should you frown?
I really *must* go, for the Printers declare
That they can do nothing now unless I be there."

" *What !* going to the *Printer's*?—what ! going again?
In this bitter cold day?—through these torrents of rain?
I must say, my love, if you'll permit me to speak,
To the *Printer's* you've been very often this week.

" Well, go to the *Printer's*—but I very much think
The *type* is a cap of gay lilac or pink ;
But go, if you please—I'll contrive to be gay,
For Captain Fitzharris dines with me to-day.

" *To look over the proofs* you tell me you go ;—
As a proof that I won't be looked over, pray know,
That Captain Fitzharris—not *lettered*, but still
Gilt very finely, shall here take his fill.

" While you write down corrections, he'll toss down your wine ;
Correct your fine speeches—he'll make some as fine ;
You go to the *Printer's* to imprint, I much fear,
Something on lips that you seldom do here."

" Did you mention Fitzharris? I wonder you can
Invite to your mansion that profligate man !
I wish you'd not ask him.—How the rain's coming down !
My mind's again changed—I go not to town."

ACTING UPON SUSPICION.

BY MRS. ABDY.

"I have often thought that I could make a very amusing volume upon the serious and comic consequences of acting upon suspicion."

MEMOIRS OF CHARLES MATHEWS.

MR. STANFIELD of Elbury Hall married his first cousin. Many objections have been made to such matches, but, in Mr. Stanfield's case, the result was marvellously satisfactory. Mrs. Stanfield was very like her husband in person, more so in mind, and most of all in temper and habits. Her twenty thousand pounds in the funds made an agreeable addition to his two thousand a year landed property; they neither of them liked London; they neither of them required, or fancied they required, watering-places; and they lived on their own acres, happy in themselves, and respected by others. Their house was not above half a mile from the populous and gossiping town of Westford, but even Miss Sowerby, the most scandal-loving and fault-seeking spinster of the place, could say nothing worse of the Stanfields than that "they were imposed upon by their servants, duped by the poor, and had a great deal too much good-nature to be burdened with much good sense!"

Mr. and Mrs. Stanfield had been married above ten years before they had any prospect of a family, and, quite in keeping with their usual character, although they had been very happy without a child, they prepared themselves to be still more happy with one.

The child was a daughter, and was named Amelia. Miss Sowerby predicted it would die within a year; the apothecary of the village confided to a few chosen patients his opinion that it might live three years; and the father and mother deemed it such a prodigy, that they feared it would never live at all. However, at ten years of age, Amelia Stanfield was alive, and likely to live, although far from healthy, and having very moderate claims to beauty. Intellect is sometimes thought to descend on the side of the mother, and sometimes on that of the father. In Amelia Stanfield's case, the point might be easily settled;—she had no right to the inheritance on either side, and, accordingly, she gave no indication of possessing it.

It was considered that a governess would be very useful in developing the dormant intellectual organs of the young heiress, and here again Mrs. Stanfield enjoyed wonderful good fortune. She took no pains about the business, and yet it was as thoroughly well done as if she had called in a committee of the conductresses of a dozen finishing schools to manage it for her.

Mrs. Stanfield did not advertise in the "Times," or even read the advertisements in it; she simply wrote a few lines to an old-fashioned acquaintance in Soho Square, saying that she wished to obtain a gentlewoman of competent attainments, good temper, and sound principles, to undertake the education of her little girl, and the very next post informed her that Mrs. Rivers awaited her pleasure. Mrs.

Rivers proved to be a young widow of five-and-twenty, who had married for love, and been rewarded by ill treatment and poverty. She was now obliged to exercise her talents for her subsistence; and as, although clever and well read, she could not sing like a *prima donna*, or draw like a Royal Academy artist, she felt inclined to accept a hundred a year, the care of a very backward, common-place child, and a home with kind-hearted, well-meaning people, who literally fulfilled their promise of considering her as one of their own family.

A year passed on with great tranquillity. Amelia's progress in knowledge, although slow, was sure. She was an affectionate child, and became truly attached to her governess. Mr. and Mrs. Stanfield respected and admired her; and although Miss Sowerby repeatedly made known her opinion that Mrs. Rivers was far too handsome for a governess, the accusation fell harmless to the ground, for Mrs. Rivers was propriety itself in manner and demeanour, and Mr. Stanfield—whether from habit, taste, or principle, I do not pretend to say—considered that the whole regions of fancy and reality did not supply so delightful a person as his own wife.

This year of peace was closed by a melancholy event. Mrs. Stanfield, after a short and severe illness, died, and her husband lamented her as deeply and truly as if she had been (what indeed he always thought her) a marvel of attraction and excellence.

Miss Mitford says, "There is no running away from a great grief," and the observation is very true; but change of scene, although it may not cure our affliction, certainly diminishes its intensity. So thought the friends of Mr. Stanfield. They persuaded him to travel; and although it was useless to mention France and Italy to so home-keeping a personage, a tour through Wales and Scotland was of essential service to him. He was accompanied by Mrs. Rivers and his daughter. They staid a few weeks at each of the principal places they visited, and returned to Elbury Hall just a year after the death of its mistress.

The popularity of Mrs. Rivers now drew to a close. Mr. Stanfield was a rich widower; his spirits had recovered the death of his wife; he was tolerably well-looking, not much turned of fifty, and deserved the epithets liberally showered upon him of "so amiable, such a temper, such a heart," &c. much better than the generality of persons do on whom they are bestowed. Many a lady, old and young, spinster and widow, felt herself inclined to become the second Mrs. Stanfield; and happy would they have been to have had any pretext for asserting that Mr. Stanfield's servants wanted a mistress, that his daughter wanted a mistress, and that he himself wanted a companion. But alas! Mrs. Rivers filled each and all of these characters, and filled them so admirably well, that it was very difficult to suggest any improvement in her discharge of the duties annexed to them.

Miss Sowerby was at the head of the love-lorn damsels pretending to the hand of Mr. Stanfield. She had heard it said that persons generally become enamoured of those who are most the reverse of themselves in character, and consequently she imagined that Mr. Stanfield, whom she always designated as "mild to a fault," would

inevitably succumb to the fascinations of a shrew. Mr. Stanfield, however, showed no symptoms of captivation, and the spinster changed her plan of attack—became soft and sentimental, talked of moonlight and poetry, and actually revived the practice of several of the songs of her youth. All, however, was in vain. She sang in a shrill and high-pitched voice, "Dinna ask me why I love thee," and "I want those eyes to gaze on me;" but Mr. Stanfield complied with the request of the first song, and disregarded that of the second, and, to complete his enormities, asked Mrs. Rivers to sing Italian—"a piece of absurd affectation," Miss Sowerby observed, "since everybody knew he did not understand a word of it." Miss Sowerby next endeavoured to enlist Amelia on her side, but completely failed in her attempt. Children are not only good physiognomists, but are also, if I may be allowed the expression, voice-fanciers, and they invariably shrink from a sharp, dogmatical tone. Miss Sowerby, too, like most people who are not naturally fond of children, had only one way in which she could talk to them—that of cross-examining them respecting their studies. Now Amelia had just begun to know enough to feel rather ashamed of not knowing more, and Miss Sowerby's anecdotes of "little girls younger than herself, who played the harp, sketched from nature, and studied German," had not the effect of amusing or edifying her, but generally led her to steal to the side of the patient and judicious preceptress, who, allowing for her early deficiencies, carefully watched the slowly-opening bud of intellect, without attempting to force it open by premature developement. Miss Sowerby, therefore, was obliged to relinquish the hope of gaining Amelia as an ally, saying to herself that "the child was shockingly spoiled, and that no good could be done with her till Mrs. Rivers was fairly out of the house." How to get Mrs. Rivers fairly or unfairly out of the house, however, appeared a difficult matter;—but none knew better than Miss Sowerby the power of scandal to wound and annoy, and she tried its effects in the present instance.

She called on every family in Westford, and expressed her opinion that it was highly incorrect that so remarkably handsome and attractive a young woman as Mrs. Rivers (Miss Sowerby could employ praise when it was for the purpose of subsequent depreciation) should be domesticated in the family of a man in the prime of life, like Mr. Stanfield, and that it was really quite the duty of some kind friend to represent to him the sad outrage he was committing on the established usages of society. Many of the ladies to whom she addressed herself were single, others had single daughters, sisters, or nieces, and all agreed that "Mr. Stanfield's conduct was perfectly horrible—that it would be a kind but very delicate office to admonish him—and that nobody was so fit to undertake it as Miss Sowerby."

Miss Sowerby thanked her friends for their favourable opinion of her, professed her readiness on that and every other occasion to do anything, however repugnant to her own feelings, that might conduce to the good of others, and forthwith walked over to Elbury Hall, and requested a private interview with Mr. Stanfield.

Her host looked horror-struck at her communication. The idea of either compromising the fame of the affectionate preceptress of his

child, or dismissing her from his house, was equally distressing to him.

"I must have time to think of it," said he, in a nervous, hurried tone.

But Miss Sowerby did not take the hint to depart. She turned over several volumes on the table, chose Mrs. Opie's "*Detraction Displayed*," which she was wont to call a most excellent book, and very much wanted, since there was such an abundance of scandal in the world, and evidently prepared herself for a long study of its contents. Mr. Stanfield, meanwhile, walked up and down the room for about ten minutes, much as if he were perambulating the quarter-deck of a ship, and then stopped short and spoke.

Mr. Stanfield had but a small share of intellect, but it did for him what a much larger share often fails in doing for its possessor—it always came to his assistance when he most wanted it. He spoke without his usual nervous hesitation, and looked his "fair foe" full in the face.

"I see the justice of what you say, Miss Sowerby," he replied. "I should be very sorry to give any room for censure, and I promise you that the cause of it shall soon cease to exist. I am very much occupied this morning, and beg you will excuse me for leaving you."

Miss Sowerby excused him very readily;—she had gained her point, and returned to Westford in high spirits, praising Mr. Stanfield as "the most persuadable man in the world, always ready to listen to reason."

Two days afterwards, the inhabitants of Westford were surprised to hear that Mr. Stanfield, Mrs. Rivers, and Amelia, had gone to London—but Miss Sowerby easily accounted for it. "Mr. Stanfield was such a good creature, that doubtless he wished to consider the feelings of Mrs. Rivers, by dismissing her from London rather than from Elbury Hall, where she had been so long domesticated."

Mr. Stanfield, however, was still more considerate of the feelings of Mrs. Rivers than Miss Sowerby had supposed. Before the month was at an end, the newspapers announced the marriage of Mr. Stanfield and Mrs. Rivers, and the servants at Elbury Hall had received instructions to prepare everything for the reception of the bride and bridegroom.

The bells rang merrily, the wedding party were welcomed by children strewing flowers, the inhabitants of Westford were bountifully supplied with wedding cake, and returned the favour by duly-paid morning visits. Some few disinterested people (solely, however, among the gentlemen) said that "Mr. Stanfield had done very well for himself," and the judgment of the disinterested was, as it generally is, worth listening to. Mrs. Rivers had not acted unwisely; she respected Mr. Stanfield's excellence of character, and had an affectionate regard for his daughter; she had known the ills of poverty, and was thankful to be preserved from them in future; she resolved to recompense Mr. Stanfield for his choice of her by making an excellent wife to himself, and a kind mother to his child, and she gave every indication of meaning to keep her word. Miss Sowerby was so

enraged by Mr. Stanfield's marriage, and so vexed with herself for having been the unintentional means of bringing it about, that she had almost resolved not to call on the bride and bridegroom, till she thought that she might probably do some mischief by going, and could do none by staying away.

She encountered the housekeeper in the hall, and addressed her in a tone of whining condolence on the subject of her new mistress; but the housekeeper would not submit to be pitied. "Mrs. Stanfield was a lady whom anybody might be happy to serve," she replied; "so very liberal in her ideas, and so very mild in her temper." Miss Sowerby passed on without any rejoinder; she probably thought that so satisfactory a report would not be given of herself by her maid of all work, whose complaints of scanty living were about on a par with those of the inmates of the Westford poor-house, and who had given to half the town a lively delineation of the fury of her mistress when she carried to her the tidings of Mr. Stanfield's marriage—fury which, like that of Cleopatra on a similar occasion, could only find adequate vent in giving a box of the ear to the innocent messenger, thereby inducing the very natural assertion, "I that do bring the news, made not the match!" Miss Sowerby was more successful in the drawing-room; she made Mrs. Stanfield look flushed by talking about dependants and mercenary marriages, and Mr. Stanfield look pale by frequent allusions to the first poor dear Mrs. Stanfield. A nobleman and his lady, who lived at some distance, were, however, fortunately announced, and their unaffected courtesy and attention restored the spirits of the bride and bridegroom, and left Miss Sowerby no alternative but that of stepping out from the French window on the lawn to join her "dear young friend Amelia," whom she had descried watering flowers in the garden.

Miss Sowerby attempted to make her dear young friend very unhappy by enlarging on the miseries in store for her, but Amelia was unaffectedly and warmly glad of her father's marriage.

Mr. Stanfield, in fact, had married principally for the sake of his daughter. I know that this assertion is often made by fathers when introducing to their house and hearth a virago, at whose first searching eye-beam the poor little trembler destined to experience her tender mercies quails in well-founded horror of its future doom. The present case, however, was widely different; Mr. Stanfield really meant what he said, and really effected the object at which he aimed, and Amelia's answer to Miss Sowerby's remark did credit to her grateful and affectionate disposition.

"I always loved Mrs. Rivers dearly," said she; "and it would be strange if I were to love her less now that she is papa's wife."

"It is to be hoped, Amelia," said Miss Sowerby, clasping her hands and looking up theatrically to the skies, that your poor dear mother knows nothing of this terrible business!"

"I am sure if she did," replied Amelia, "she would be very much pleased, for she often said how earnestly she hoped that Mrs. Rivers would never leave me till I grew up."

"Poor child," said Miss Sowerby, applying her handkerchief to her eyes, "you will grow up to no inheritance. I dare say your unprin-

cipl'd stepmother will have a son to despoil you of your ancestral acres."

"I do not know what ancestral acres are," answered Ameia, "but I should like to have a baby in the house of all things, and papa told me on his wedding-day that he had made over to me all mamma's fortune, so I am never likely to be very poor; see, Miss Sowerby, what a beautiful nosegay I have gathered for you!"

The spinster, who made it a rule never to refuse anything, took from the hands of the child a fragrant bouquet of roses and geraniums, in return for the rue and wormwood which she had been unsuccessfully endeavouring to administer to her, and returned home, declaring that "the domestic happiness of the Stanfields had too much of display in it to be lasting; and that Amelia was more spoiled, and a greater simpleton than ever!" The domestic happiness, however, of the newly-married pair seemed to increase instead of diminishing; in fact, Mr. Stanfield had never been so happy at any other period of his existence; the good fortune to which I have alluded as his lot through life, shone brighter instead of growing dimmer, and although he was perfectly satisfied with his first choice, he had still more reason to congratulate himself upon his second. His present lady had all the sweetness and mildness of disposition possessed by the former, adding to it that which she wanted, a strong and cultivated mind. Mr. Stanfield was not clever himself, but he could judge of cleverness in another, just as a person without musical knowledge can judge of the style of a first-rate singer, unable to appreciate every little ornament, but admiring the general effect of it, and feeling that it is different to the performances of ordinary people. The intellect of his wife gave him consequence in society, and was accompanied by so much good taste and good feeling, that she never assumed superiority over her husband on that account, and she was rewarded by his devoted and grateful affection.

My readers will suppose that Mrs. Stanfield, thus idolized by her husband, must have attained the summit of human felicity; but such was by no means the case. Mr. Stanfield was nervous, sensitive, or, to use a plain but expressive term, "fidgety;" these qualities seldom decrease with age, and they had much increased since his second marriage; loving his wife so fondly, he thought that his greatest proof of affection was to make himself very unhappy about her every hour of the day; if she sat near an open window, he dreaded all the horrors of consumption; if she seemed out of breath, he anticipated a complaint of the heart; and if she returned from a walk a little later than usual, his fancy, not generally very vivid, conjured up a terrific phantasmagoria of footpads, mad bulls, gipsies, and runaway horses. Mrs. Stanfield was annoyed by this over care, as every clever woman must be; but she had set out in her matrimonial career with the golden rule of looking at all the good of her situation, and disregarding, as far as she could, all the evil of it; and by dint of sometimes rallying and sometimes reasoning with her too anxious husband, she contrived to keep his inquietude within tolerable bounds, and to avoid the fate of being quite killed with kindness. A year passed on in peace and satisfaction; at the end of that period Mrs. Stanfield was

looking decidedly ill, and seemed much out of spirits. The Westford Æsculapius was rejoiced: he hinted a hundred inquiries as to her symptoms, but Mrs. Stanfield evaded them all—she would not confess herself to be ill. Strange to say, Mr. Stanfield, with all his nervous anxiety, did not feel uneasy about her when there appeared real cause to do so; perhaps, however, this inconsistency is not very remarkable; those who waste their attention on trifles of any description, usually deaden their energies to a degree that renders them indifferent to matters of real importance. All that Mr. Stanfield feared was that his wife had caught cold, and as this verified his constant predictions that she would do so, he felt some self-satisfaction in his own wisdom, and contented himself with anathematising his dear Sophia's thin shoes, and loading her with presents of sable boas, pelerines, and mantillas, which would have qualified her, had private theatricals been the fashion at Westford, to have taken the part of the heroine of a Russian melodrama, dressed quite in keeping with the character. Mr. Stanfield might be blind to his wife's illness, but Miss Sowerby was not; the quick apprehension of hate far exceeds that of love. Mrs. Stanfield would not have recourse to medical advice; it was evident, then, that her disorder was on the mind, and Miss Sowerby was only anxious to find out the precise nature of it. She knew that her troubles could not proceed from disagreements with her husband, for Miss Sowerby had luckily a spy in the Elbury establishment. Soon after Mr. Stanfield's marriage, his housemaid followed his example; her place was vacant in consequence, and Miss Sowerby's laundress was anxious to see her daughter promoted to the situation. Miss Sowerby promised her interest, but, like many patrons of higher posts, made it a condition that her protégée's little services should be at her command, or, in other words, that every little dispute, trouble, or misunderstanding which might occur in Mr. Stanfield's house from the basement to the attics, should forthwith be conveyed to Miss Sowerby to disperse all over Westford, or not, as it seemed best to her discriminating judgment. Nothing, however, occurred; and as Martha Wilson was not a fashionable novelist, or a penny-a-line contributor to a newspaper, she could not make an interesting story without any materials for it; at length, however, she paid a visit to Miss Sowerby's parlour, and poured a welcome tale of scandal into the ears of her delighted patroness.

Two months ago, it appeared, Mrs. Stanfield's own maid began to receive letters with the London post-mark, directed in a free, bold, manly hand; she was taxed by the servants with having a lover, and, like most ladies in high or low life, denied the accusation. A few days ago she happened to be from home when a letter arrived for her; it was only secured by one of the modern wafers, which are so easily removed that honour alone renders them any security at all. The honour of Martha Wilson was not proof against the temptation: under the pretence of taking care of the letter for its owner, she conveyed it to her room, and carefully removed the wafer—it was only a blank cover; within was a letter directed to Mrs. Stanfield, but the writer, more careful of that than of the enclosing sheet, had sealed it with a crest, and Martha, afraid to examine it, folded it up again,

replaced the wafer, gave it to the lady's maid when she returned, and proceeded to Miss Sowerby to enlighten her with the news. Miss Sowerby immediately, of course, placed the worst possible construction on the mystery; in fact, the circumstance *did* appear rather suspicious, for Mrs. Stanfield had frequently mentioned that she had no relations living except a family of cousins, who were settled in London in independent circumstances, and with whom she was in habits of regular and recognised correspondence; the letters could not be from any petitioner for her bounty, for the generosity of her husband rendered it quite unnecessary that such communications should be made in private. "They must come from a lover," said Miss Sowerby, and her heart beat with rapture at the thought. She gave Martha five shillings, a donation of unexampled prodigality on her part, and told her at all risks to open the next letter that came, read the contents, and secure it again with a plain seal; but, alas! the next letter was taken in by the lady's maid in person, who stood in the hall evidently on the watch for it, and Miss Sowerby could only console herself by assuring all her friends at Westford, in the greatest confidence, that she had ascertained that Mrs. Stanfield was in habits of correspondence with a lover, and that she should immediately disclose her conduct to the poor injured husband, did she not deem it prudent to wait till matters came to a more decided crisis; consequently the whole female population of Westford looked on Mrs. Stanfield with horror, as being something of a mixed personation of Calista in the Fair Penitent, and Alicia in Arden of Feversham, and longed as earnestly as a child for the beginning of a pantomime, that the day might arrive which would bring discovery, disgrace, and ruin, on a woman who had never injured them except by her superiority to themselves in mental and personal endowments.

On the following day Martha Wilson called on Miss Sowerby, not to acquaint her of the arrival of another letter, but to tell her of an extraordinary plan of Mrs. Stanfield's, which a more candid judge than any of the Westford coterie might call rather suspicious. I have mentioned that Mrs. Stanfield had a family of cousins in London; their name was Belton, and they resided in one of the unfashionable streets of Bloomsbury; she had made known to her husband and her household her determination to go and pass a month with these relations, only taking her own maid with her. Mr. Stanfield felt that losing his wife for so long a time would be like losing a part of himself; he offered her a house for the season in London, and gave her permission to invite her whole family of cousins to Elbury Hall for an indefinite time; but Mrs. Stanfield, usually so mild, patient, and self-denying, was on the present occasion fixed in her purpose; and as she eagerly thanked him for his painfully-extorted consent, he began for the first time to think that his wife was a little less angelic than he had supposed her to be; the discovery of her human weaknesses, however, did not at all reconcile him to the loss of her society, and the sound of the carriage coming to the door on the morning of her departure seemed to him like the knell of all his social happiness for the next month. Neither had Mrs. Stanfield at all the air of a lady who, having battled successfully to get her own way, is on the point of leaving her uneventful home and dull companions, to enjoy the gai-

ties of London unwatched by any restraining eye; she took leave of her husband more as if it were for life than for a month, weeping bitterly as she did so, and clasping Amelia in her arms with earnest affection.

Miss Sowerby was at her window as the carriage passed through Westford. "Well," said she, "if I ever become a wife, I shall prove a very different sort of one —;" and two or three gossiping visitors who stood behind her simultaneously exclaimed, "No doubt you would."

Miss Sowerby had very important business to perform that day more important even than calling on Mr. Stanfield, and telling him how unfortunate a man he was to be thus deserted by his wife. Martha Wilson had informed Miss Sowerby of the name of the street in Bloomsbury where Mrs. Stanfield's cousins resided, and it was music to her ears. In that street was a boarding-house, in which was domesticated a little busy, loquacious widow, an intimate friend of Miss Sowerby's, and she wrote to her a long letter, telling her all the circumstances that had recently occurred at Elbury Hall, and instructing her to make inquiries, whether any young man in particular visited intimately at the Beltons, and whether Mrs. Stanfield rendered herself the subject of any observation or animadversion. A week elapsed before Mrs. Pearson answered this letter; and Miss Sowerby had paid her projected visit to Mr. Stanfield, and rendered him so nervous by her dire forebodings and melancholy condolences, that the housekeeper was obliged to administer hartshorn drops, camphor-julep, and sal-volatile, alternately to him during the rest of the day.

When, however, the letter came, it completely repaid Miss Sowerby for the trial of waiting for it so long.

"The lady you mention," wrote Mrs. Pearson, "came this day week to stay at the Beltons. I was greatly surprised when you said in your letter that she meant to remain with them for a month, for I had happened to know some weeks ago that they intended to pass three months in France about this time, and that they had let their house for the period of their absence. In three days they carried their plan into execution, and their visitor and her maid vanished, where I could not tell, but they did not accompany the family on their travels. Knowing your anxiety for the information, and knowing that the party who had engaged the house had not yet taken possession of it, I called, and asked the servant, who remained there, if she could tell me where Mrs. Stanfield had removed; she informed me that she had taken a lodging in one of the streets near the Regent's Park, and as she acquainted me with the name of the street and number of the house, I walked there the next day. I found that she occupied only a part of the house, since the remainder was to be let. I asked to see the landlady, under pretence of wishing to engage the apartments, and make some inquiries respecting her other inmates: she informed me that she had only a lady and her maid, who had taken the lodgings for a month, and had been with her two days; that the lady appeared out of health and spirits, and of very retired habits, and that she had each day received a visit from a gentle-

man. I think you will allow, my dear friend, that I have acquitted myself very successfully in this little delicate commission, and have gained a great deal of information without committing myself or you. If you would like to come up to town, and sift the matter fully in person, Mrs. Hutton's establishment is extremely select, and very reasonable."

Miss Sowerby dropped the letter in the excess of her joy. She might have said, as gentlemen do when their health is drank at public dinners, "This is the proudest day of my life!" so complete a triumph did it give her over the envied and hated Mrs. Stanfield. Carefully picking up the precious document, she placed it in her bosom, and sallied forth that evening to a tea-party, feeling qualified to be the complete lioness of the evening. As soon as tea was over, Miss Sowerby disclosed her information to the company, and professed her determination to go to London forthwith, for that the guilty ought always to be exposed; it was a duty to society to do it. It is astonishing how zealously people discharge their duty to society when they can destroy the peace and reputation of a fellow creature by doing so!

"Poor Mr. Stanfield will break his heart," said a compassionate old lady, taking out her pocket handkerchief.

"Not at all," remarked a portly matron by her side, encircled by five unmarried daughters, "he will get a divorce, marry again, and be much happier than he ever has been yet."

"I should not like to marry a divorced man," said a pale, sentimental girl.

"Nonsense, my dear," said the portly matron, "it is the best thing you could do; you would be sure never to be reproached with the good qualities of his first wife."

"I think," said the lady of the mayor, casting a furtive glance at her husband, "that when the affair becomes generally known, the public authorities of Westford ought to carry up an address of condolence to Mr. Stanfield."

"Ridiculous, my love," replied the mayor, with a reproving look; "it is no matter of condolence at all; that is," he added in a hurried manner, perceiving the four stormy orbs of his wife and his daughter Clarinda fixed upon him, "gentlemen have nothing to do with those things; if the ladies like to compile a little address among themselves, I am sure I have no possible objection to it."

This hint mollified the lady, and that night she wrote the rough draft of an address of condolence to Mr. Stanfield, which Clarinda copied the next morning in an exquisite Lilliputian hand, on a sheet of superfine lavender paper edged with black.

It is much more easy to talk about an undertaking than to carry it into effect. Miss Sowerby had declared her intention of proceeding to London "forthwith" in as decided a manner as if she had nothing to do but to desire her own maid to pack up her dresses overnight, and to give orders to her coachman to bring the carriage to the door early the next morning; there were many preparations, however, to be made prior to the commencement of the journey. Miss Sowerby, like most country ladies, had an awful idea of the finery necessary to constitute

herself presentable in London, and felt quite unequal to the task of facing the "select circle" of Mrs. Hutton's establishment, till her straw bonnet was lined and trimmed with pink, her blue silk dress turned, her blond scarf cleaned, and her apple-green satin dyed black. All these economical contrivances occupied a great deal of time, and a fortnight elapsed before Miss Sowerby's wardrobe was duly refreshed, and her place taken in the coach for the ensuing day. She did not, however, much lament this delay: Mrs. Stanfield had engaged her lodgings for a month, consequently there would be no fear of her escape, and every day would be likely to accumulate fresh evidence, and render her guilt more glaring and decided; besides which, Miss Sowerby, in this intervening fortnight, was loaded with caresses, fine speeches, and invitations to tea and supper from the *élite* of Westford, who all wished to see Mrs. Stanfield exposed without incurring the risk and responsibility of being themselves active agents in the exposure, and consequently welcomed in Miss Sowerby that character not to be found in fable, and rarely existing in real life—the rat willing to tie the bell round the cat's neck!

The day after Miss Sowerby's arrival in London, she proceeded, according to the direction of her friend Mrs. Pearson, to the street where Mrs. Stanfield resided, carefully cloaked and veiled, so that she might not be recognised by her erring neighbour if she should happen to be at the window?

Beyond all expectation, Mrs. Stanfield *was* at the window, looking very pale and ill.

"Ah!" soliloquised Miss Sowerby, "conscience has been busy with her; no doubt her lover begins to grow tired of her; I dare say she is watching for his approach."

If such were the case, she did not watch long, for a very handsome man, in the prime of life, knocked at the door, was admitted, and Mrs. Stanfield immediately disappeared from the window. Miss Sowerby returned home, exulting in her good fortune, to communicate it to her dear friend Mrs. Pearson, to declare her belief, from the upright bearing and carriage of the stranger, that he was certainly military, and to indite a long epistle to Mr. Stanfield, telling him the whole state of the case, adjuring him to come up to town without delay, and recommending to him, as a legal adviser, Mr. Stephen Sharply, a most promising young man, and a third cousin of her own. The wish to do good is said to have the power of brightening our mental faculties; the wish to do harm has often the same effect. Miss Sowerby was not in general a good letter-writer; but so inspired was she by her present subject, that Mr. Stephen Sharply himself could not have stated the facts with more clearness and accuracy than did his third cousin.

The feelings of Mr. Stanfield, when he received this letter, were truly pitiable: knowing little of the world, and still less of books, he was not at all conscious how frequent are the instances in which innocence is unjustly aspersed, and "life's life lied away," under circumstances of mere suspicion. Thinking (unlike most husbands) humbly of his own attainments, and highly of those of his wife, he was disposed rather to blame himself, for having ever supposed she could love him, than to censure her for ceasing to do so.

"Oh! how will she repent," he thought, "how bitterly will remorse be felt by such a mind as hers!"

Taking a hurried leave of Amelia, whom he merely told that circumstances of great consequence demanded his presence in London, the unhappy husband, thus suddenly precipitated from the height of happiness to the depth of misery, proceeded on his journey, and when he arrived in town immediately wrote to beg that Miss Sowerby would come to him at the hotel where he had fixed himself. She complied with the summons, all sweetness and sympathy, for she, like the poor matron at Westford, anticipated a divorce, and thought that in that case Mr. Stanfield might turn his tardy regards on herself, in which event she meant generously to forgive his former neglect, accept his proffered hand, and pass a speedy reform bill for the benefit of himself, his daughter, and his household, who had all, she averred, been completely spoiled and ruined by the milk-and-water insipidity of the first Mrs. Stanfield, and the hypocritical cajolery of the second. She immediately proffered her company to Mr. Stanfield on a visit to his wife's apartments, hoping, as she expressed it, "to surprise her into a confession;" and though she declared it was "inexpressibly painful to the feelings to go on such an errand," no one would have been inclined to believe that she was suffering deep distress, who marked the brisk alertness of her walk, and the unwonted sparkle of her eye.

Arrived at the door, she desired the wretched husband "to place the matter in her hands," and inquired if Mrs. Stanfield was at home; the servant replied in the affirmative, and Miss Sowerby hastily ascended the stairs, leaving her companion to follow as he could. How did she congratulate herself on her good fortune when she beheld the *tableau* that awaited her entrance. Mrs. Stanfield, pale and drooping, was reclining on a sofa, and by her side sat the handsome stranger, whom Miss Sowerby had before seen; he was holding her hand, but quickly dropped it on the appearance of the unwelcome visitor. Mrs. Stanfield looked amazed at the sight of Miss Sowerby, but started violently when she beheld her followed into the room by Mr. Stanfield.

"My dear husband!" she exclaimed, rising to meet him, "who could have possibly told you of my retreat, after all the pains I have taken to keep it secret?"

"O Sophia," said the unhappy man, bursting into tears, "how could you desert one who so truly loved you?"

"Perhaps my conduct was injudicious," replied Mrs. Stanfield, "but, believe me, dear Stanfield, it only proceeded from a wish to spare your feelings."

"Dreadful to listen to such sophistical hardihood," exclaimed Miss Sowerby; "she calls conjugal infidelity 'injudicious,' and declares that she runs away from her husband because she 'wishes to spare his feelings.' Now, Mr. Stanfield, you see what comes of marrying a literary lady, and Amelia told me only last month that she had three hundred volumes in her own little library."

Mrs. Stanfield sank back on the sofa, apparently too much horror-struck at Miss Sowerby's accusation to be able to reply to it, and the handsome stranger for the first time spoke.

"Am I to understand," he said, "that this lady is accused of having deserted her husband and her home?"

Miss Sowerby was so shocked at being addressed by this "gallant gay Lothario," that she had never so much felt the want of her fan; she, however, made a temporary one of her well-darned Scotch cambric pocket-handkerchief, and replied, "Facts speak for themselves, sir; your presence here is a confirmation of them, and an insult to the eyes of indignant virtue."

The handsome stranger burst into a contemptuous laugh, and then took the hand of Mrs. Stanfield. Miss Sowerby imagined that he was seized with sudden delirium, especially as he held the lady's hand in a very extraordinary manner, compressing the wrist within his thumb and finger. In a moment he dropped it, and said, "My name probably is known, madam, to Mr. Stanfield and yourself, although my person is not. I am Sir Walter Tudor, and the world has imputed to me some skill in surgery. Three months ago I was staying in your neighbourhood, and received a letter from a lady requesting a private interview with me. I complied—the place of meeting was at an hotel in Westford—the lady was Mrs. Stanfield. She informed me that she wished to consult me on the state of her health, and that she had an important reason for declining to acquaint any medical man in the vicinity with her illness; this reason, Mr. Stanfield, was her consideration for the feelings of her husband, who was, she said, so nervous and apprehensive, that were he acquainted with half her symptoms, he would deem them to be indicative of some fatal disorder. Happy should I have been to inform her that she had no reason for uneasiness, but it was my painful task to tell her that the symptoms of which she spoke were likely to increase, and that in the course of two months it would be necessary that she should undergo a painful and dangerous operation."

Here the penitent husband uttered a smothered exclamation of horror and grief, but the surgeon, who evidently regarded him with more disdain than sympathy, did not stop to reassure him, but proceeded regularly in his narrative.

"Mrs. Stanfield received this intelligence with unexampled fortitude; she promised to write to me from time to time to acquaint me with the state of her health, and desired me to send my answers under cover to her own maid, that the secrecy might be preserved, which she considered of so much importance. At length the period drew near for which I had prepared her, and to my great surprise she wrote word to me that it was her intention to come privately to London with no attendant but her own maid, and to undergo the operation without the knowledge of her husband and friends. I deemed it my duty to write to her, remonstrating with her on this extraordinary measure, and telling her how much, at such a trying time, she would need the comforts of home, and the consolations of the society of her family. She was, however, resolved upon the project; no consolation, she wrote to me, could be so great to her mind as that of feeling that her husband was spared the pangs of knowing her present suffering, and anticipating her future danger. 'If,' she continued, 'you consider me in a precarious state after the operation is over, it will then

be time enough to write to my husband ; I shall at least have saved him many weeks of sorrow : if, on the contrary, I recover, and return home in health, how delightful it will be to tell him the whole that has happened, and to receive his thanks for my consideration for his feelings ! ”

Sir Walter Tudor here paused a moment, and directed a searching glance to Mr. Stanfield, which I am concerned to say that gentleman had not courage to meet.

“ I then,” he continued, “ ceased my opposition, and Mrs. Stanfield, attended only by her faithful and affectionate servant, removed to these apartments shortly after her arrival in London. Ten days ago the destined operation was performed, and never, Mr. Stanfield, has it been my lot to witness, among those who have been sustained and encouraged by the presence and attentions of their nearest and dearest friends, such fortitude and powers of endurance as were displayed by your wife in her self-imposed seclusion and desolation. She rapidly recovered, greatly owing to her happy disposition and firm mind ; and I had just been telling her that in a very short time I should consider her sufficiently restored to health to return home, and cheerfully congratulating her that her trials were over. How little, alas ! did I conjecture that her worst trial was to come, that she was to undergo mental tortures far more painful than the bodily sufferings to which she had been subjected, and that her generous disregard of self, and kind anxiety to spare the feelings of her husband, would be made the ground-work of an accusation against her truth and honour ! Fearing that in her present weak state the task of vindicating her aspersed character might be too much for her, I have taken upon myself to relate this simple narrative of facts, and will leave it to herself to pronounce the pardon of those whose injurious suspicions have so deeply wronged her.”

Sir Walter Tudor was a man of good taste and judgment ; he had not the least wish to be witness of a “ scene ; ” therefore, when he had concluded his speech, he took his departure without waiting for any comments upon it from his audience.

Miss Sowerby had sat perfectly immovable during his narrative, looking just like an evil fairy, whose spell has been suddenly destroyed by the superior influence of a good one ; she had never, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant of Westford, kept silence for so long a time before. Mr. Stanfield, usually reserved and taciturn, now became suddenly wordy, if not eloquent. He implored his wife to forgive his unjust suspicions, and concluded by ungallantly playing the part of “ king’s evidence,” showing up Miss Sowerby as the original contriver and instigator of his journey to London, and earnestly attempting to convince his dear Sophia that he ought to be blamed very little, because the malicious spinster, who had deceived and misled him, deserved to be blamed so much more. Mrs. Stanfield, who was not quite perfection, although very near it, looked rather coldly at her husband while he was uttering his apology ; soon, however, she reflected that as he did not possess a strong mind and good abilities, he was not so accountable for his conduct as if he had been endowed with those gifts—that, in effect, it was his feeble and inert character

which had rendered her plan of secrecy necessary, and that his recent fear of the loss of her affections was but another branch of the thousand and one misgivings and doubts respecting her health, spirits, and tranquillity, which had been a source of passing annoyance to her ever since her marriage; accordingly she graciously accorded to him her pardon, and Miss Sowerby, encouraged by the sight of the olive-branch extended to a fellow-culprit, began piteously to request that "dear Mrs. Stanfield would be so good as not to punish her by withdrawing her friendship from her, but would continue to think the same of her as ever."

"I am willing to grant both your requests, Miss Sowerby," said Mrs. Stanfield with somewhat of her former animation; "I cannot withdraw my friendship from you, because you never possessed it; and I am willing to think the same of you as ever, because I always believed you capable of wantonly aspersing the character of your fellow-creatures, although I never till now had an opportunity of knowing on how slight a foundation you could raise the edifice of calumny. I need not inflict any punishment on you, because you have one in store for you; not that of a reproving conscience—the conscience of the slanderer is generally tolerably seared and hardened—but you have failed in your endeavours to injure and disgrace me; this will be the first part of your punishment, and the second will be, that you will be universally ridiculed for your disappointment. I am not going to read you a homily, Miss Sowerby; none, I believe, systematically break the ninth commandment who would not upon temptation break any of the others, and it must be a higher power than mine that can reform a mind so evil in its ways. Let me, however, give you some advice on the score of policy, if not of principle. When next you endeavour to blight the fair fame of a neighbour, take care that you do not, like the hero of *La Mancha*, mistake wind-mills for giants; let your 'assurance,' be 'doubly sure' of her guilt before you proclaim it to the world; and do not content yourself with planning four acts of a tragedy, unless you can certainly foresee the melancholy catastrophe of the fifth, lest, as in the present case, it be suddenly converted into a comedy, setting forth the mistakes and mortifications of those scandalizing ladies who adopt the hazardous measure of '*Acting upon Suspicion!*'"

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ESCAPE—A LESSON TO ALL LADIES, OLD, YOUNG, AND MIDDLE-AGED, UPON THE DANGER OF BEING TOO DEVOTEDLY ATTACHED TO POETRY.

CONSTANCE had only remained in the second drawing-room long enough to give the retreating poet time to get down stairs, and Penelope therefore found her, as she expected, in her own room. Contrary to the established absence of all etiquette between them, she knocked before she entered, but being immediately desired to "come in," she opened the door, and perceived that her friend was walking about the room in very visible agitation.

"My dearest, dearest Constance!" she exclaimed, "it makes me wretched to see you thus; you, who have turned my days of mourning into days of joy; must I see you the victim of blighted affection and disappointed love?"

The eyes of Penelope were full of tears as she spoke, and she even trembled as she took the hand of her friend. "You are very kind, my dear Penelope," replied Constance with an air of considerable embarrassment. "But you must not think about me, you must not indeed! It is such a joy to witness your happiness, and that of dear Markham, that for some time I think I can be contented to be without any other."

"Alas! my dear girl, you know not what you say! I know better than you do the misery arising from anything that goes wrong where the heart is concerned. But let us hope the best, Constance! You know the pithy proverb, *The quarrels of lovers, et cetera.*"

"Then you think Mr. Mortimer did not hear what I said when he declared that *he required nothing farther?*" said Constance, deeply colouring.

Penelope thought this vivid blush denoted hope, and her kind heart shrank from the idea of destroying it; nevertheless she did not quite think that Mortimer had spoken without meaning; on the contrary, though flattering herself that all things *might* be set right again, she could not help feeling that there was much cause to fear for the ultimate consequences of an offence so deeply resented; and thinking that too great confidence on the part of Constance might be injurious to her cause, she said, "My dearest friend, I would neither have you hope nor fear too much. It is impossible to believe that such a devoted attachment as Mortimer's for you can be wiped out and destroyed by the folly and impertinence of Mr. Weston, or by your own thoughtlessly gay reception of it; and yet, my Constance, it would be folly to deny that the unfavourable impression made thereby was no light one."

"But you think it is Mr. Mortimer's intention to return and apologise for his strange exit?" said Constance, with a look and tone that completely puzzled Penelope.

"Apologise? I did not quite say that, Constance," returned her friend. "I should rather suspect, indeed, that he would expect apology from you."

"Apology from me? *C'est un peu fort, par exemple*, as our delightful Mr. Weston would say," returned Constance, with so little of sorrow or alarm of any kind in her manner as to completely overthrow all the views which Penelope had taken of the case, and led her to believe that she had most unnecessarily alarmed herself.

"You understand him better than I do, I have no doubt, Constance, and therefore I shall expose my blundering by no farther conjectures. He will be at your feet again in an hour or two, as you perfectly well know, I dare say," replied the greatly comforted Penelope.

The incomprehensible Constance now turned pale, and having remained silent for a moment, said in a voice of the deepest gloom, "Penelope! Do you really think so?"

"How can I doubt it, when I see you treat the matter so lightly?"

"*Lightly!*" repeated Constance with a shudder.

"My dear Constance, I never before found it so difficult to understand you," returned her friend; adding gravely, "I very much wish that you would tell me yourself what you think of the scene that has just occurred."

"Then I will do so," was the reply. "I think Mr. Mortimer has advisedly and deliberately resigned all claim to my hand, and that in a most offensive and unjustifiable manner."

"Is it possible that you can believe this, and speak it so composedly?" said Penelope.

"Not composedly. I do not speak it composedly," replied Constance, "but I speak it with the calmness of conviction. Had I any doubt about it, I might display more agitation."

"And do you really mean, Constance, that you conceive your engagement with Mr. Mortimer to be at an end?" demanded the astonished Penelope.

"Most assuredly I do. Would you have me persist in holding him to it after the words which you heard him utter? Ask John Markham's opinion on the subject, my dear friend."

"Constance, my poor dear Constance! you are angry now, and fancy you could bear this separation without sinking under it. But I tremble to think of the revulsion of feeling which will follow when you are more yourself, Constance; it will break your heart!" There was so much true affection and tender sorrow in the accent with which this was uttered, that the heart of Constance smote her for not speaking some little word to set so much friendly anxiety at rest. Yet for the life of her she could not find courage to say, "Do not be alarmed, Penelope; I shall not die of love for Mortimer!"

She would have given much to relieve this anxiety; but the remembrance—O so recent!—of Penelope's ill-concealed surprise at the suddenness of the attachment she had formed for this same Mortimer, now so lightly resigned, covered her with confusion, and the

very utmost effort she could make towards being sincere, was by permitting something like a smile to dimple her cheek as she said, "Shall I tell you, Penelope, what would be the best remedy for all my wayward feelings? If you will grant me the favour I am going to ask, I shall escape out of this great Babylon with but little scathe, for I shall carry the conviction of having acquired considerable wisdom to comfort me; and moreover, I shall have before my eyes the result of the only right thing I have done since I entered its precincts. Will you let me be your bridemaïd, and accompany you in your proposed expedition to the Isle of Wight?"

"Will I let you, Constance? Could there be anything imagined capable of giving me so much delight, did I not fear, dearest, that, despite the spirit with which you brave it now, you might, when the time comes—and it is only next week—repent the rashness of your departure, and drag at each remove a lengthening chain?"

"Do not let that idea trouble you, Penelope," replied the enfranchised *fiancée*, turning away her head to hide the smile she could not entirely check. "I believe I have a great deal of—of resignation on some subjects. And will you let me go then? and you do not think John Markham will object to it?"

"You do not name him with sufficient respect, Constance," replied the happy Penelope. "CAPTAIN Markham will not, as I have reason to believe, feel any very great objection to the presence of the lady who has hitherto acted as his guardian angel in this business."

"God bless you both!" exclaimed Constance, kissing her. "What a comfort it is to have one point of one's life upon which one can fix one's eyes without regret!"

No sooner was Constance left alone, than she set herself with very praiseworthy earnestness to examine the conduct of Mr. Mortimer, and the nature of her own feelings in consequence of it. Not the severest censor that could have been appointed to judge her conduct could have condemned her more severely than she was ready to condemn herself; and many were the crusty words and hard names with which her conscience battered and bruised her, as she looked back on the history of her feelings respecting him. But notwithstanding the very disagreeable nature of this occupation, a sensation of happiness that no sense of propriety could check, and that no self-reproach could smother, took possession of her heart, and the murmured "Thank God!" with which her meditations ended, was most fervent.

Having recalled with great accuracy all that Mortimer had said during their last important interview, she thought, to use the language of her accomplished chaperon, that she owed it to herself to inform him by letter that she "accepted of his resignation," and she accordingly sat down and wrote as follows:—

"In addressing you, Mr. Mortimer, for the last time, I am desirous of avoiding anything that may wound your feelings, or lead you to misinterpret mine. Believe me I feel grateful to you for the frankness of manner which enabled me at once to perceive the present state of your sentiments towards me, and I truly think that we have both reason to rejoice at the accident which has led to the dissolution

of an engagement, too hastily formed perhaps to give any reasonable expectations of lasting happiness. Permit me to assure you of my very sincere good wishes, and to request that you will believe me always your friend,

“CONSTANCE RIDLEY.”

Her first sensations, after finishing this epistle, were those of unspeakable relief, that so would end the affair which of late had made her so completely miserable. But it presently occurred to her that it was possible the gentleman might choose to seek a final interview; and the horror into which this idea threw her might have convinced her, had any proof been yet wanting, of the lasting wretchedness she had escaped. She blessed the gentle Mr. William Weston in her heart of hearts, and determined not to lose any portion of the blessing he had brought her, by sending her letter while there was yet time for her dreaded correspondent to answer it in person. The quiet, unostentatious, wedding of Penelope was to take place on the following Tuesday; it was now Saturday, and having shown her letter to her still wondering friend, she locked it in her desk, signed and sealed, in readiness to be despatched to its address on the day she left town.

CHAPTER XXX.

A TOUCHING INTERVIEW, A CRUEL INTERRUPTION, AND AN APPOINTMENT.

WHILE this was going on in Bruton Street, the poet, according to his invariable custom on all such heart-rending occasions, had the venetian blinds of his drawing-room let down, ordered chicken broth and green tea for his dinner, told his servant to deny him to everybody, and then threw himself on a sofa, to soothe his agitated spirit with “the dear pages of some new romance,” till it was time to dress for the opera.

His sweet friend, Mrs. Gardener Stewart, had a box for the alternate nights during the season, and pitying fate deemed that on this present Saturday the box belonged to her. It was to the darkest corner of this tranquil retreat from sorrow that his harassed spirit transported him the moment he fixed his mind upon the question of whither he should go, and his body followed it without loss of time. On arriving at the Haymarket, he found his fair friend already there, shielded as usual from the encroachments of the general eye by the very largest and most effectual screen ever applied to such a purpose. Her dainty little feet were sustained on the cushioned seat of a chair, set opposite to her, and her almost recumbent attitude and languid eyes seemed to indicate that though declaring herself passionately fond of music, the listening to it was an exertion almost beyond her strength.

“C’est toi, ami?” she exclaimed, as the privileged poet appeared before her; and though it was also beyond her strength to hold out her hand to welcome him, she made such a movement with her fingers, as signified that he might touch them. He did so, not only with his own

fingers, but with his lips likewise—a ceremony which he invariably performed whenever he wished especially to call upon her friendship and sympathy.

“My poor dear Mortimer, you are not well! you look harassed and unhappy, dear friend. For Heaven’s sake tell me what has happened to you?” said Mrs. Gardener Stewart, with an exertion of strength which spoke deeply, if not loudly, for the sincerity of her friendship.

“Alas! my best—may I not say my only friend? The only human being that perfectly understands me? It is to you alone, of all heaven’s envoys upon earth, to whom I could open my lacerated heart without restraint, and without fear of misconstruction or reproof.”

“Alas, my poor Mortimer!” returned Mrs. Gardener Stewart, drawing forth her smelling-bottle from the little *sac* of gold embroidery which lay on the chair before her. “Alas! how often am I called upon to repeat to you those touching lines—

‘Nor peace nor ease the heart shall know
Which, like the needle true,
Turns at the touch of joy or woe,
And turning, trembles too!’

Tell me, my too sensitive friend, what new sorrow is it that now dims that poetic eye, and lends a tone of such thrilling sadness to a voice attuned by Apollo’s self. Say! tell me, Mortimer, what new grief has befallen you?”

“Oh! why am I here? Why have I left the still deeper shadow of my own solitary cell, but to tell you all? My lovely friend! This is the only consolation Heaven has left me, and without it I must soon be with those who are not! Ay, and should wish to be so!”

“Poor Mortimer!” she replied, the fringed curtains of her eyes raised sufficiently to show how effectually his words had “filled their cups with tears.” “Be very sure that, under every imaginable circumstance, you will find sympathy from me. Speak then, and fear not that the siren voice of Grisi should call off my attention. No! not even Rubini himself would be heard, were I listening to you.”

“Kind pitying angel! You shall indeed hear all,” began Mortimer, carefully placing himself so as to be invisible to the house, but audible to her—“yes, all!” But ere he could pronounce another word, the door of the box was opened, and, wonderful to tell, Mr. Gardener Stewart and one of his own particular friends entered it.

“How do, Mortimer?” said the well-behaved Amphitryon, presenting two fingers to his lady’s friend. “My dear,” he continued, addressing his wife, “let Beaumont have this corner, will you? He wants to study Cerito at his ease, for his gout won’t let him stand in Fop’s Alley;” and so saying, he obligingly, and with every precaution to avoid being troublesome, removed backwards a few inches the chair which sustained his lady’s feet, placing another in the corner opposite to her for his friend. “That will do, Beaumont, will it not?” said the good-natured man.

“Perfectly, perfectly, my dear fellow, and as I never speak, you know, I shall not be a troublesome neighbour to your lady,” was the

reply; upon which Mr. Gardener Stewart nodded a tripartite nod to the party, and left them.

It would require a pen powerful as that of the tortured poet himself, to do justice to the sufferings which this arrangement caused him. He looked at the eyes of his friend, and the eyes of his friend looked at him. A slight glance at the chair beside her, invited him to sit down, but he shook his head, and muttered "impossible!" She gave a glance at the venerable gentleman now lounging forward over the front of the box, which spoke eloquently of vexation and disappointment, and then said, "When shall I see you again, Mr. Mortimer?" in a tone which all the world might have listened to with impunity.

"To-morrow? May I call on you to-morrow?" he replied, endeavouring to assume a manner corresponding to her own.

"Never was anything so unfortunate?" said she softly, but with great feeling. "I am absolutely, quite absolutely obliged to go to-morrow to the dowager Lady Crichton's villa at Richmond; and I must of necessity remain there till Tuesday morning. But I will leave her almost at daybreak, if you will promise to call on me. My dear friend! will you call on me punctually at half past five o'clock on Tuesday?"

Mr. Mortimer looked very nearly overwhelmed by the distant date of this appointment, but he saw not any appeal against it, and meekly bending his head in token of obedience, he retired with a sigh, which a woman of much less sweetness of character than Mrs. Gardener Stewart must have felt to be heart-rending.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A LOVE-AFFAIR BROUGHT TO A VERY HAPPY CONCLUSION—A WEDDING—A PHILOSOPHICAL EXAMINATION OF THE HEART OF WOMAN.

How Henry Mortimer passed this tedious interval it is impossible to say, for he made himself completely invisible till the hour appointed, when, pale, languid, and moving almost with the noiseless step of a ghost, he presented himself to his expectant friend.

The melancholy story he had to tell is too well known to the reader to require repetition here; nor can any one who has perused the foregoing pages be at any loss to guess in what tone it was related, or in what spirit it was listened to;—neither party breathed a word, or even a sigh, that was not in keeping with their characters; and the result was, that the poet left the lady deeply convinced that, to a mind constituted with such exquisitely sensitive delicacy as his own, the friendship of such a woman as Mrs. Gardener Stewart outweighed in value the love of a thousand heedless girls, who knew not how unappreciable was the treasure offered in the affection of a poet's heart. On reaching his home, Mortimer sat down and wrote the following epistle to Constance.

"It would be but a useless labour, madam, were I to attempt any

explanation of the feelings which drove me from your presence on Saturday last—were you capable of comprehending such feelings, you could not have caused them. The body has been too much overwrought by the suffering mind to permit my performing this dreadful duty before, and all that I have now power to say is, that I trust you will never experience such agony as you have caused.

“I remain, madam,

“Your very unhappy humble servant,

“HENRY MORTIMER.

“P.S.—It is, I trust, unnecessary to add, that these lines are intended to speak an eternal farewell!”

It so chanced, that the servant commissioned by Constance to convey her letter to Mr. Mortimer met his servant about half-way between the two houses, in the act of conveying his farewell epistle to her. The two men halted and greeted each other, each holding up to view the note he carried.

“That is half my trot saved, Jerry,” said the envoy of the poet, placing his despatch in the hands of his brother lackey. “But, my eye, how gay we are! Which of your young ladies have you been marrying this morning, that you wear such a dashing favour?”

“The eldest, the handsomest, and the best,” replied Jerry, with considerable animation. “Our Miss Penelope was married this morning to Captain Markham, and your master’s bride that is to be, as they say, set off with them as bridemaids, and beautiful they both looked as two angels. The very last thing Miss Ridley did before she stepped into the carriage was to give me this letter for your master.”

“And that betokens more favours, and then I shall come in for my share,” replied his friend; after which the two Mercuries parted—Jerry to consign his charge to the hands of Mrs. Hartley, and the other to deliver his to his plaintive master.

The first idea of Mortimer, on receiving this letter, was, that it had been written in reply to his own, and, having dismissed his servant, he opened and read it under this impression; but there being something in its style which seemed not in accordance to his first idea, he recalled the man, and learned from him the fact that the two notes had crossed each other *en route*.

“Did the servant give any message with it?” demanded Mortimer.

“Only that Miss Hartley was married this morning, sir, and that Miss Ridley was gone off with her as bridemaid.”

This was news that gave no pleasure to the poet. The setting off as bridemaid to her favourite friend had nothing of that sad, repentant character about it which ought, in common decency, to have taken possession of the soul of one who had been raised so high and had fallen so low; and what made the emotion it produced the more vexatious was, that it was impossible for him to carry it to the footstool of Mrs. Gardener Stewart—for, till now, he had been accustomed, on every occasion of the kind, to listen to the soft breathings of her pitying sighs for the sufferings of the fair creatures to whom nature had denied the perfection necessary to their arriving at the once hoped-for bliss of becoming his wife. These posthumous pityings had furnished

out a multitude of interesting interviews, which had left very sweet and tender impressions on his memory. But could anything of this kind arise upon his informing her that the lovely but insufficient Constance had left town as one of a gay bridal party to the Isle of Wight? O no! There was something of bathos in this that was revolting to him, and, after about half an hour's meditation upon it, he ordered his portmanteau to be made ready, and set off by the Dover mail, for the purpose of refreshing his spirits by passing a week or two in Paris.

* * * * *

If this mode of restoring the tranquillity of his spirits answered as well as that which Constance had imagined for herself, the termination of their tender passion produced no very melancholy effects on either of them. Having passed with great propriety through the trying ordeal of listening to the condoling lamentations of Mrs. Hartley, Margaretta, and Caroline, on this "excessively disagreeable termination of an affair that had been so much talked of," the spirits of Constance rose to a degree of happy exhilaration that demanded her utmost efforts to conceal from observation. She longed to be on the hill-side at Appleby, that she might join her voice to those of the blackbird and the thrush in thanksgiving for the joy she felt. Perhaps she hoped to tame down a little this exuberant gaiety by paying a farewell visit to Mrs. Morley, for whom she had conceived an affection the strength of which sometimes astonished herself, and the idea that she might perhaps be going to see her for the last time certainly did bring tears into her eyes. But she met no sympathetic melancholy in return. Mrs. Morley, it is true, caressed her with every demonstration of affection, but this was accompanied by so unusual a degree of hilarity as to suggest the idea, that the separation she came to announce was matter of joy rather than sorrow.

"And you are quite sure, Constance, that you will carry away with you no 'starling to cry Mortimer,' in order to console you for the loss of the poet?" said she, laughing, as she looked in the sweet tranquil face of her young friend. "You are quite sure of this, are you, my love?"

"Quite sure of it, Mrs. Morley," replied Constance, blushing, and avoiding the penetrating eyes that were fixed on her.

"Well, then, my dear, I really am very greatly in hopes that you will live to recover this tender disappointment!"

"I hope I shall," replied Constance, stedfastly determined not to smile.

"If, happily, you *should* survive it, my love, I am not without hopes that we may meet again," returned Mrs. Morley. "I feel by no means disposed to utter an eternal adieu, unless, indeed, you should tell me that you would, for the rest of your life, rather avoid seeing any of those whom you have known during your acquaintance with your lost lover."

"No, no," replied Constance, too much in earnest to speak with any restraint; "there can be nothing I should so earnestly wish to avoid as the danger of not seeing you again."

Mrs. Morley looked very much as if she would willingly have said

more about their future meetings, but, for some reason or other, she checked herself, and with an affectionate "God bless you!" on the part of Constance, and a gay "*au revoir*" on that of Mrs. Morley, they parted.

* * * * *

Well pleased as Mrs. Hartley certainly was to see her eldest daughter at the altar, before she again stood before it as a bride herself, she failed not to mark, by a multitude of little delicate circumstances, the contempt in which she held a choice which involved the necessity of such pitiful economy as attended all the preparations for this wedding.

"I presume, Penelope, that you will not think of sending round cards?—and as to wedding-cake, thank heaven! that is totally out of the question."

"Just as you please, mamma," replied the happy Penelope, caring not the fraction of a straw about cakes or cards either.

"And pray tell me—shall you make a point of my going to church with you?—I hardly think it will be necessary."

"I shall be very *very* sorry if you will not do me this kindness, mamma," said her daughter gravely.

"Nay, dear Mrs. Hartley, you must not refuse us the honour of your presence," said Constance coaxingly. "Besides, do you know, I have actually taken the liberty of ordering the very prettiest white bonnet and feathers that I ever saw to be sent home for you with mine—you will quite break my heart if you refuse to accept it."

"My dear child—I really must scold you—but certainly I will go to church, if you both wish it. But I almost fear, my dear Constance, that the ceremony may be too much for you, after the painful circumstances which have so recently occurred. Take care not to tax your strength too far, my love!"

"I shall be thinking too much of Penelope to have any leisure to bestow upon myself," said Constance.

"Well, to be sure! that is most extraordinary! I should have thought you would have rather died than have gone to a wedding just now," said Margaretta—"and, to tell you the truth, I really think it would be more delicate to avoid it."

"It will not be a very public wedding, you know, Margaretta," replied Constance, with the most perfect good-humour. "Nobody need know anything about it but ourselves."

"You won't give it up then, though you have heard my opinion, which I assure you is that of your brother also?"

"No, Margaretta, I certainly shall not give it up," said Constance quietly.

"And what in the world do you mean to do with your maid?" demanded Mrs. Hartley, with an expressive curl of her lip. "You will not, I think, be able to pack *four* into a hack post-chaise."

"Penelope has kindly consented to use my carriage," said Constance, "and that has a seat for two servants behind."

This speech caused a very expressive look to pass between Mrs. Hartley and Margaretta, and, after the pause of a moment, the latter said, with the amiable familiarity of a sister elect, "*Your* carriage, Constance?—I was not aware that you had a carriage."

"Very likely," replied Constance; "I have only purchased it lately."

"Detestable impertinence!" thought the future Lady Ridley. "How I hate and detest that girl! A pretty campaign she has made of it! And now she will have to drive home to her grandmother in a second-hand coach and three, having to confess that she has lost her half-caught poetical conquest by the way! To *my* house in London she shall never come—on that point I have most completely made up my mind."

But these thoughts were expressed only by a little lambent, flickering sort of light in the eyes, which were drawn up into a peculiarity of expression, difficult to describe, but easy enough to understand.

"How in the world, my dear, could you contrive to manage such a purchase?" said Mrs. Hartley. "Where and when did you go to look at it?"

"Captain Markham was kind enough to manage all that for me," replied Constance, with imperturbable composure.

"Rather a new sort of service for him to be employed upon, was it not?" said Mrs. Hartley, with a little laugh. "I hope he has not run you into any great expense, my dear? I should be excessively sorry if anything of that sort were to happen, especially as everything has gone so wrong about other things, you know. I only hope your grandmamma will not fancy that *I* am to blame about any of it. I shall be excessively sorry, indeed, if she thought I had sanctioned your running into any extravagance."

"All the expenses I have been indulging in," replied Constance, with a smile, "will be covered by the sum with which I provided myself for wedding-clothes."

Margaretta lifted up her hands and eyes.

"I am sorry to hear you speak so lightly of that very painful business, my dear," said Mrs. Hartley solemnly. "A match broken off is no jesting matter, I assure you."

"I meant no jest upon it, Mrs. Hartley, and only alluded to the circumstance to spare you the uneasiness of fancying that I was running into debt," replied Constance gently.

Constance, in truth, had taken the liberty of consoling herself for her lost lover by expending the money she thus alluded to, and which amounted to three hundred pounds, in supplying various little deficiencies in the preparations of her friend. A handsome second-hand carriage, in excellent repair, was one of the articles thus purchased—and, spite of all that the more elegant members of the family might think to the contrary, a more completely happy bridal-party never drove from a church-door than that which got into it after the performance of the ceremony which made the admired Penelope Ridley the wife of the poor John Markham.

"It will be better, I think, under all the circumstances, that you should take any breakfast you wish for *before* the ceremony," said Mrs. Hartley to her eldest daughter, when discussing the final arrangements for her wedding. "A large and splendid breakfast-party is a very agreeable thing after weddings made upon different principles, but I confess, Penelope, I shall be glad if you will excuse my doing anything of this kind. Do I make myself understood?"

"Perfectly, mamma, and I think you are quite right," was the cheerful and ready reply.

So, from the church-door the party proceeded the first stage towards Southampton, the newly-married pair feeling blessed beyond their utmost hopes, and the happy bridemaids, conscious of having caused the joy she witnessed, and full of her own escape, which every moment seemed to become more precious to her heart, looked the very emblem of gladness and of hope.

"Constance," exclaimed Penelope, one day during the delightful month that followed, while standing *tête-à-tête* together on the terrace of their pretty garden at Ryde—"Constance, how comes it that you seem as happy from having lost your lover as I am from being united for ever and for ever to mine?"

"Because, as I presume," replied Constance, colouring, "we were not attached precisely in the same manner."

"Yes, yes, I presume so too," returned her friend, laughing; "but how came you so greatly to mistake your own heart?"

"The blunder and the blame, the folly and the fault, with all the horrible mischief which might have followed, if Heaven had not sent an angel in the form of William Weston to save me, were all your own, Penelope," replied Constance.

"Mine! What can you mean? For goodness' sake explain yourself," returned the astonished bride.

"That you are 'innocent of this, my dearest chuck,' as far as intention goes, I do indeed believe," replied Constance; "and yet I have spoken nothing but the truth in accusing you. Do you remember a certain conversation, Penelope, which took place between us immediately after we came to town, respecting the literary lions of the age?"

"Not very distinctly; yet I do remember that we had such a conversation," replied Mrs. Markham.

"Do you remember telling me, that although I should see at Lady Dort's the individuals whom I so eagerly desired to know, I had no chance whatever of being suffered to approach within the charmed circle of their intellectual world? Do you remember saying this?"

"Yes, I do; I remember it perfectly. It was the result of my own experience, and I thought it might save you from disappointment," replied Penelope.

"Those words, dear friend, laid the foundation of all that followed. The intense mortification I felt from hearing you say that I must never hope to find any real genuine mental companionship among the gifted great ones whom I so languished to know, could only be equalled by the delight of thinking that, in the case of Henry Mortimer, at least, you were mistaken. What the feeling may most correctly be called which took possession of me, I really do not know;—whether it was vanity, enthusiasm, admiration, or sheer midsummer madness, I cannot say; all I know is, that it certainly was not love—and that Mr. Henry Mortimer made the same discovery, will ever be considered by me as the most blessed circumstance of my existence."

"Perhaps, my dear, if I had assured you that it was absolutely im-

possible Mr. Weston could have condescended to address you on terms of equality, you might have fancied yourself in love with him too," said Mrs. Markham.

"Perhaps I might—and if I had, I do not think I should have blundered more egregiously," replied Constance.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TWO MORE WEDDINGS—A TROUBLESOME OLD ACQUAINTANCE—DOUBTFUL RECOLLECTIONS, AND RECOLLECTIONS NOT DOUBTFUL.

Before the first happy moon of Penelope's wedded life had worn itself away, Mrs. Hartley had the satisfaction of attending her second daughter to the altar, in a style in all respects as agreeable to her feelings as the ceremony which preceded it had been the reverse. Settlements, dresses, jewels, equipage, bridemaids, and breakfast, were all in the very first style of elegance. The mob, both at the house-door and that of the church, was everything she could desire; and the manner in which the police found themselves under the necessity of interfering, could not fail to be gratifying to all the most powerful feelings of her heart. Sir James and Lady Ridley, of course, both looked infinitely handsomer than they had ever done before; and if the most perfect sympathy could have ensured the future harmony of their existence, they had reason to hope for days of unbroken concord, for the intense satisfaction with which they both contemplated themselves, and all their belongings, was not only equal in quantity, but as precisely of the same tone as if the mind of the one had been the reflected image of that of the other. Mrs. Hartley, for sundry important reasons, was anxious that her daughter Caroline should accompany Lady Ridley in her excursion to Paris, and at length, though not without some difficulty, she achieved it; so that when this second bridal party drove off, that exemplary parent found herself alone in her house, and, as she would have been ready to declare to any one who would have listened to her, in the most lonely and low-spirited condition imaginable.

There must certainly be some innate feeling in the mind of all widow ladies blest with grown-up daughters, that a second marriage has something, in some way or other, objectionable in it. How else can we account for the sort of instinctive averseness which such persons invariably betray to announcing any new change of condition which they may contemplate?

Though the matrimonial project of Mr. Marsh and Mrs. Hartley was steadily adhered to on both sides, and little quiet *sub-rosa* preparations for it were going on without intermission, not one single word on the subject had as yet been spoken to any member of the lady's family, nor had it been thought advisable by either to interrupt the smooth current of their dear Sir James Ridley's glittering progress towards matrimony, by calling off his attention to the affairs of his friend. All, however, is not lost that is delayed, and it was not long before the event, thus shyly kept in the back-ground, was permitted to shine forth in modest, middle-aged splendour before the public eye.

It was exactly three weeks after Sir James and Lady Ridley's flashing equipage had driven from Bruton Street, that the handsome and very fashionable-looking travelling carriage of Mr. and Mrs. Marsh did the same thing—the house being given up, and all sorts of orders given to the servants, sent back to Laurel Hill, that the mansion should be duly swept and garnished against their arrival, which was settled to take place in a fortnight.

It was on the day following that on which this last recorded wedding took place that Mrs. Captain Markham, by that time arrived at her beloved little home at the Cabin, received the following epistle :

“ MY DEAR PENELOPE,

“ As nothing is so disagreeable to all parties as idle discussion upon matters already decided on, I have scrupulously and systematically avoided naming, either to you or your sisters, my intention of uniting myself to Mr. Marsh till the event had actually taken place. I am now his wife, and trust that the motives which have induced me to become so will be duly appreciated by every member of my family, as well as by the public in general. I owe it to myself, however, to state that nothing would have led me to take this step but a firm conviction that the doing so would be highly advantageous to my family in general, and to my unmarried daughter Caroline in particular. For her sake, dear girl, I have sacrificed a thousand feelings, which would have led me to devote the remainder of my life to the memory of your ever tenderly-lamented father. I trust that I make myself understood, and that in addition to the satisfactory approval of my own conscience, I shall have the pleasure of receiving the cordial gratitude of my children. We are going to set off in an hour or two for Cheltenham, where we intend passing a fortnight previous to our arrival at Laurel Hill. With kind compliments to all inquiring friends,

“ I remain, my dear Penelope, your affectionate mother,

“ CAROLINE MARSH.”

The surprise occasioned by the information thus conveyed to the Markhams was considerable, but the emotion amounted to little more. Penelope felt, and expressed, a very sincere wish that her mother might be happy, and then endeavoured to gratify the natural curiosity of her mother-in-law by describing the appearance and demeanour of her new stepfather. In this task her husband was called upon to assist her, and the family party, seated in the shade upon their lovely lawn, were thus engaged, when Captain Salmon, the *ci-devant* guardian of Constance Ridley, joined them.

The subject of their discourse was immediately communicated to him, and was received by a much stronger demonstration of emotion than any one else had betrayed.

“ Married !” he exclaimed with the whole force of his lungs. “ the devil she is !” and then waving his hat over his head, he vociferated with the most hearty good will, “ Hip, hip, hip ! hurrah !” The whole party stared at him with surprise, and he stared at them in return with astonishment equally remarkable. “ Upon my soul, you take it very coolly, my good friends, and I really wish you joy of

your imperturbable philosophy. The fact is, I suppose, that you are so tremendously in love, that no mundane considerations whatever have power to produce the slightest effect, Captain Markham. But in my humble opinion this good lady's marriage might be expected to cause a little more sensation among you."

Penelope, who was much less intimately acquainted with the worthy veteran than the rest of the party, listened to all this vehemence with an air of being, *tant soit peu*, offended. She knew that her mother, in common with every woman who marries a man considerably younger than herself, had of course made herself liable to a variety of jocose observations, but that any such should be uttered before her was painful.

Captain Salmon perceived the unusual shade of gravity which shaded the countenance of the fair bride, and starting up, laid his hand on the shoulder of her husband, saying, "John Markham, let me speak to you for a moment."

The young man rose, and giving his arm to his old friend, they wandered away together down a winding path on the hill-side, which led to the river below. About one-third of the way down was a bench, placed at a small open space that had been cut in the abounding underwood. Having reached this, Captain Salmon seated himself upon the bench, and making a sign to his companion to do the like, he turned towards him, and said, "John Markham, is it possible that you don't know what this good lady has done by marrying?"

"What she has done, my dear sir? Why, rather a foolish thing, I should think, as the man must be at least a dozen years her junior."

"That's not it, Captain John. Is it possible that she has kept her children ignorant of the fact? or is it possible that she can be ignorant of it herself?"

"What fact?" replied Markham, looking greatly puzzled. "My dear sir, I really do not know what you are talking about."

"Then I shall have all the pleasure in the world in telling you, my dear fellow," replied the old man, rubbing his hands in high glee. "You must please to know, John Markham, that an accidental circumstance about the title-deeds of a bit of pasture land, making part of the Laurel Hill paddock, was the cause of my seeing a part of old Hartley's will immediately after his death. Though only a part, for the will was a very long one, I dare say I read a great deal more than I remember, for I can't say I ever expected to care so much about it as I do now. But there was one clause which made an impression on me, because it amused me, an old bachelor as I was, to perceive how anxious the poor gentleman had been to have, and to hold, the lady even longer than that very awful ritual, the marriage ceremony, specifies. In short, the will declares, that in case his beloved widow, Mary, or Jane, or Sally, or whatever it is, should contract a second marriage, fifteen hundred per annum of the income bequeathed to her by the will should be forfeited, and go immediately in equal portions of five hundred a year each, to his three daughters. And if you did not know this before, Captain John Markham, I think I have brought you a very tolerably good piece of news."

"Is this possible?" cried Markham, colouring with emotion. "Upon my honour, Salmon, I hardly know how much five hundred a year means, but I should think it must be enough to make my sweet girl comfortable, and if so, I am the very happiest fellow that ever lived."

"Away with you then—clamber up the hill again, and tell her so; and remember, Markham, I don't know that this old bride knows anything about the matter. May be not. It is always right to think the best, you know; but it won't do for you to stand waiting, cap in hand, while that pretty creature up there, (who looks as happy in your father's cabin as if it was a palace fit for a queen,) is kept without knowing whether she has a house of her own or not. That won't do at all, and therefore I advise you to write a civil gentlemanlike sort of a letter directly, wishing her all manner of joy, and so forth, and stating that as your wife is now become entitled to five hundred a year, you shall desire immediately to look out for a suitable residence for her, or any other phrase you may like better, that may announce the knowledge you have of the real state of affairs. And now, God bless you! I know you are longing to be aloft there with this news." And so saying, the kind-hearted veteran continued his walk down the hill, leaving Markham almost overpowered by the intelligence he had received. Yet he felt that the communication he had to make to his wife, replete as it was with dear domestic hopes for the future, was nevertheless not without some mixture of embarrassment in it. That the fair-seeming Mrs. Hartley, with all her ceaseless professions of devoted attachment to her family, had intended to pass the clause in her husband's will *sous silence* appeared beyond doubt, and he knew Penelope too well not to be certain that the discovery of this would cause her great pain. But this drawback on the happiness that awaited them did not arise, for Penelope immediately, and with the most perfect sincerity, declared herself convinced that if her mother had ever been acquainted with this clause, she had forgotten it; and though not without fear that it would prove a disagreeable surprise, she never for an instant conceived the idea that it was even possible she could have been acquainted with it. Whether Mrs. Markham were right or wrong in this belief, is a point that it is by no means needful to discuss. Ladies do very often forget clauses in wills and settlements, and it is certainly possible that Mrs. Hartley might be one of them.

But be this as it may, the receipt of Captain Markham's letter at the breakfast-table of Mr. and Mrs. Marsh at Cheltenham, though it was written in the most obliging tone possible, produced a scene by no means of an agreeable description. The servant had been sent to the post for the daily newspaper, and the sight of the letter which was laid down beside it, and addressed to her in a hand with which she was not sufficiently familiar to recognize, made her exclaim, "Who in the world can have found me out here, my dear love? I do believe that people of fashion *cannot* hide themselves. It seems to be a natural impossibility." She opened the letter as she spoke, and casting her eyes immediately upon the signature, read, "'John Markham.' What in the world can put it into his head to trouble me by fancying

it necessary to write? I dare say it will not be very long before my pretty Caroline follows the excellent example we have all been setting her, and, upon my word, with so many new claims upon my time, I can by no means undertake to correspond with all my sons-in-law. You would not approve that, my dear, would you?" This was said as she negligently suffered the letter to hang dangling from her left hand, while she stirred her tea with her right.

"At any rate look at his letter, my dear Mrs. Marsh. There may be some particular reason for his writing," observed her husband.

Thus admonished, the complacent bride set herself to do as she was desired, and became speedily convinced that Mr. Marsh was right, and that there was a particular reason for Captain Markham's opening a correspondence with her. Her complexion varied very shockingly, first becoming very red, and then very pale.

"Well! what is it?" demanded Mr. Marsh, rather impatiently.

"Why, it is the very oddest thing I ever heard of," replied the lady, endeavouring to speak with composure. "Penelope's husband makes a claim upon my income, in consequence, my dear, of my marriage with you, which is either altogether nonsense, or the most extraordinary thing that ever was. He says, in the coolest style possible, that the three girls are each to have five hundred a year upon my marrying again. I am sure I have no more recollection of anything of the kind than the babe unborn, but there is no doubt, certainly, that it is *possible*; it might have been so, without my remembering it, for Heaven knows I was in no state to read wills when poor dear Mr. Hartley died. But the very strangest thing of all is, how in the world John Markham should ever get hold of such an idea. I am quite positive he never got it from Penelope. However, it is no good to torment ourselves about it one way or another. Is it, my love? Thank God! your noble fortune makes it a matter of very little consequence whether this meddling young man be right or wrong."

During the whole of this harangue Mr. Marsh sat with his eyes fixed immovably on the varying countenance of his bride, while a frown that became more and more deeply impressed on his low, red-looking forehead, gave to his countenance an expression as little beaming with love as can well be imagined.

"A matter of little consequence?" he growled forth at length, like the first peal of thunder that comes to interpret the lowering aspect of a threatening sky. "It is quite as well that I should tell you at first, as at last, madam, that my fortune is not one that can make the loss of fifteen hundred a year a matter of no importance. You never thought it necessary to inquire the amount of my fortune, and I therefore never thought it necessary to tell you. There was no great chance that we should be burdened with a numerous offspring, and so long as I knew that there was income enough between us to make such a figure as I desired, there was no need whatever to enter into minute calculations. As to settlements, we were both aware of the absurdity of saying anything on the subject. You had no power to settle anything on me, because your property

was yours only for life ; and this being the case, it would have been out of the question, let me have what I might, that I should settle anything on you. No wise man ever communicates to any one the amount of his fortune, unless he is compelled to do it. I, for one, never have, nor ever will, commit this folly. My attention, madam, in marrying you was directed solely to the amount of income, and if I find that yours falls short by fifteen hundred a year, I shall most assuredly hold myself at liberty virtually to dissolve this joint stock company of ours, and leave you to lament your unfortunate want of memory at your leisure."

On hearing this, the lady could do no less than burst into tears, a ceremony which she immediately performed ; upon which her spouse vacated his place at the breakfast-table, and walked out of the room.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A LETTER ON BUSINESS FROM A SENSIBLE WOMAN—ANOTHER LETTER ALSO ON BUSINESS FROM A SENSIBLE MAN.

Mrs. John Markham was heartily and sincerely attached to her husband's family, every one of whom both deserved her affection, and returned it. Nevertheless, it is most certain that the hope which now for the first time seemed within the reach of probability, that she might possess a dwelling of her own, and thereby be enabled to perform that dearest of all duties to a loving woman's heart—

" Well-ordered home, man's best delight to make,"

did open before her a perspective of enjoyment, which it was impossible for her to contemplate with indifference. But she would not permit herself to dwell upon it so long as her husband's letter to her mother remained unanswered. Sometimes she thought that Captain Salmon's intelligence might prove to be altogether unfounded, and oftener still she trembled lest, if discovered to be true, it might be the means of producing a degree of family discord that it was terrible to think of. This very reasonable anxiety, however, was not permitted to torment her long, for within a week she received the following letter from her mother :

" MY DEAR PENELOPE,

" Never was astonishment greater than mine on receiving your husband's letter respecting the clause in your father's will. That the statement made therein is perfectly correct I have ascertained ; but how I can have so long remained ignorant of it, is something truly astonishing. The devoted affection I have ever shown you all, must convince every one who hears of the circumstance, that, considerable as the loss is to me, I must hail the knowledge of it with the most heartfelt delight. You have all heard me for years deplore the unfortunate state of dependence in which it was your father's pleasure to leave you. Heaven knows that, during the whole of my widowed life, this has been the ceaseless source of the most bitter regret to me. I am

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little likely, therefore, to lament a discovery which at once and for ever removes the cause of this regret. I am sorry to say, however, that Mr. Marsh does not see the thing exactly in the same light as I do : but that, on the contrary, he has the unkindness and the stupidity to reproach me with not having told him what I did not know myself. This certainly, and I am sorry to say it, does not speak well either for his understanding or liberality, and were choice still in my power — But it is in vain to look back ; all I can now do is to content him, if I can. I am not without hopes that Sir James Ridley will consent to wait for my death before he claims his share of this money, and I have no doubt that I shall be able to settle everything satisfactorily with Caroline, who of course cannot object to pay handsomely for her board ; therefore, my dear Penelope, you are the only one whose claim is likely to be inconvenient just at present ; and I owe it to myself to say this, with all the openness and candour of my temper. If your husband could make it convenient to accept three, or, let us say, two hundred a year instead of five, it might make a great deal of difference in my domestic felicity. Do I make myself understood ?

“ I remain, my dear Penelope,

“ Ever your affectionate mother,

“ CAROLINE MARSH.”

On receiving this letter, Penelope put it into the hands of her husband without a word of comment. A slight smile passed over his features as he read it, but he too avoided all criticism on its contents, only saying, “ I think, my love, that as the most important part of this letter is, in fact, addressed to me, it will be better that I should answer it.” Most readily did his wife agree to this ; nay, so little did she wish to mix herself with any of the details of the business, that she was well pleased to learn, in the course of the day, that his letter had been sent off without her seeing it. The letter itself will best explain *why* he had spared her the trouble of reading it. It ran thus :

“ My dear madam ;—My wife having communicated to me the letter she has received from you, I have taken upon myself to reply to it, as it is in truth I alone who can do so. My situation, with respect to income, is certainly not precisely the same as that of Sir James Ridley ; nevertheless, I beg to assure you that whatever line of conduct he may think it right to adopt in this business, I shall hold myself in readiness to follow the same.

“ I remain, &c. &c.

“ J. MARKHAM.”

It was but rarely that two days, or even one, passed without a visit from Constance to Penelope, or from Penelope to Constance ; but it so happened at the time when this interesting correspondence was going on, that old Mrs. Ridley had a family staying with her from a distant part of the country with whom the Markhams were not acquainted, and this circumstance had interrupted their usual intercourse ; but on the evening of the day that the above-cited letter of

Captain Markham was sent off, Constance made her appearance on the lawn before the cabin, where as usual the whole family was assembled, and, forgetful for the moment of the singular circumstances attending the discovery on which she came to congratulate them, and which were not of a nature to be perfectly agreeable to her friend, she uttered an exclamation of unmitigated delight at the intelligence, which she had that day received by a letter from her brother.

"The business is not quite settled yet, dear Constance," said Penelope, colouring; "but God bless you, dearest, now and always, for all the interest you take in us."

"Not settled?" said Constance, too eager in her joy to perceive the shade of restraint in the manner of Penelope; "not settled? how can that be? I do not understand you."

Penelope did not answer, and therefore her husband did, and with all his habitual frankness. "The settling your friend talks of, dear Constance, depends altogether upon your brother. If he declines receiving the income his wife acquires by this forfeiture, I shall do so likewise, and so I have told Mrs. Marsh."

"If that be all," replied Constance demurely, and endeavouring by all possible devices to conceal her inclination to laugh—"if that be all, I have it in my power to prove to you that the matter is quite settled. Hear what my brother says about it." She then drew forth the epistle she had just received, and read from it the following sentence.

"Though it is a trifle hardly worth mentioning to a man of my fortune, I dare say my grandmother will be pleased to hear that I have come into five hundred a year by Mrs. Hartley's marrying. She wrote to tell me of it, which was all fair enough, but she was silly enough to add that she would rather not pay it, if I would be so kind as to excuse her—she did, upon my life and soul. Isn't it queer that such a sensible woman could talk such nonsense? However, of course I made short work of that joke, and told her that my lawyer would take care and see that I got the money regularly. But by good luck there is no danger of any mistake about that, as all the money is in the funds, and the transfer will be made out to all the three parties concerned immediately. It was a capital joke, wasn't it, to fancy I'd give it up?" As soon as the perusal of this document was concluded, Constance repeated her congratulations, and then for the first time it seemed as if the whole circle ventured to confess their delight at this most unlooked-for acquisition.

"It would have been the study of our lives, my dearest girl," said old Markham, looking fondly at his new daughter, "to have rendered these close quarters as comfortable to you as we could; and you won't fancy it proceeds from want of hospitality, when I tell you that I glory in thinking that you and that luckiest of all lucky fellows there will have a home of your own."

"Bless her, she will make a paradise of it, wherever it is," said the old lady. "I do think that, take all things together, we are the most fortunate family that ever lived—I do indeed."

"But it must not be too far away, Penelope," cried one sister.

"No, indeed! We could not bear to lose her again, now we have

once had her," said the other. And then the whole party set about considering what pretty places there were within beautifully easy distances, that were to be let, or might be to let, and about which it would certainly be worth while to make some inquiry.

This delightful occupation lasted till the moon rose high above their heads, and then John Markham, his wife, and youngest sister, escorted the happy Constance home, who, without any mixture of feeling concerning Mrs. Hartley that could in the slightest degree lessen her delight, set such an example of joy and gladness concerning what had happened, that the spirits of Penelope seemed to follow hers, and she felt all the happiness of having, to the extent of her very fondest wishes, embellished the destiny of the man she loved.

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"The happy Constance!" Could Constance, the disappointed, the forsaken, the affianced, and the unaffianced, could she, returned from the brilliance of London to the deep retirement of Appleby, all her gay hopes flown, and all her enthusiasm vanished, could she be indeed "the happy Constance?"

Yes—everything is comparative, and compared to the last week or two she had passed in London, the present was a period of almost unmixed happiness to her. Perhaps she was conscious, too, that she was the better and the wiser woman for all that had happened to her. She remembered with tingling cheeks the unmitigated confidence in herself which had made her shrink from the idea of asking the advice of any human being in the choice of a companion for life, and with genuine and deep humility she now thanked Heaven for having saved her from the effects of it. Her bright eyes never opened to the day without her murmuring to herself, "I am free!" and though there might be some recollections of her London campagne which would, in spite of all she could do to prevent it, suggest the idea that, but for her own folly, she might have been happier still, she drove the thought from her with such pertinacious resolution, that she flattered herself it was growing weaker every day she lived. It might be so—and at any rate it is certain that she was gay, blooming, and contented.

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The arrival of Mrs. Marsh at Laurel Hill was delayed for several weeks longer than was expected, and when she came at last, it was in a style far unlike the scheme she had laid down for herself. What had become of Mr. Marsh she did not deem it necessary to explain even to her daughter Penelope, merely saying, in answer to her inquiries, that it did not suit him to come into the country at present. Of her neighbours she saw nothing, desiring her daughter, whom she only occasionally permitted to approach her, to circulate a statement of her being in a very precarious state of health, and in fact too ill to leave her room. In this manner she passed about three weeks at her mansion, always actively employed, the moment her daughter left her, in collecting together and carefully packing whatever was at once the most valuable and the most portable of her possessions there. The complaint from which, by her own account, she was suffering, she called incipient inflammation of the lungs, stating that she had already taken London advice, and been assured that it was absolutely neces-

sary she should make immediate preparations for going to a milder climate—talked of Nice, and of Naples, of Malta and Madeira, but declared she should settle nothing definitively till her “darling Caroline” joined her in London. She positively refused to see any one; not even Constance, nor any of the Markham family, were excepted from this general exclusion, to account for and excuse which, Penelope was desired to state the opinion of a London physician that the act of talking was replete with danger to her.

At length she informed her daughter, that having concluded all her business, she should take her departure on the morrow, and then dismissed her with an embrace about as chilling as that with which she had dismissed her on the morning of her marriage.

On the first Saturday after her departure, the county paper contained a flaming advertisement announcing that the elegant mansion of Laurel Hill was “to be let furnished, and entered upon immediately.”

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This strange arrival, and still stranger departure, filled the whole neighbourhood with gossip; but like other wonders, it died its natural death at the expiration of the allotted nine days, and the still closed windows of Laurel Hill seemed all that remained to remind the county of the umquhile Mrs. Hartley.

It was soon after this seemingly peaceable oblivion had settled upon the unsatisfactory adventures of Mrs. Marsh, that Mrs. Markham the younger was seen, one fine morning in the month of September, approaching the glass door that opened from the drawing-room of Appleby Hut upon the lawn. She found Constance and her grandmother exactly as she had expected to find them; the latter mechanically employed in plying her knitting-needles, and the former in reading to her. The sight of Penelope in the distance was always a signal for the work or the book of Constance to be thrown aside, while, let the weather be what it might, she threw open the glass door, and flew out to meet her.

“Why have you not brought my little Mary with you, Mrs. John Markham?” said the old lady reproachfully.

“Because your little Mary was engaged in some notability with her mother,” replied Penelope, “and I, having that most precious of all commodities, some news to bring you, did not deem it proper to wait for her. John has scampered away to the post-office with his answer to the letter that conveyed my news; so here am I, all alone, like a good gossiping neighbour as I am, determined to bring my budget to you before any part of it could be picked up by common fame, and travel here before me.”

“Well, my dear, and what is it?” said the old lady, with as much or perhaps rather more eagerness than if she had been five-and-twenty.

“I will read you the letter, ma’am,” replied Mrs. Markham, drawing forth the document which she seemed to consider as so important, “and then you will be pretty nearly as wise as I am on the subject. Now hear. ‘My dear Markham.’”

“But who is it from, my dear?” cried Mrs. Ridley, interrupting

her. "The name of your correspondent may, perhaps, throw rather a useful light upon his communication."

"No, my dear madam, I do not think it would help you at all. And as to Constance, she shall guess who it is, after she has heard the letter. And now I will begin again. 'My dear Markham;—the advertisement of a house to let in the north of Devon, and, if I mistake not, in your immediate neighbourhood, has just caught my eye, and when I tell you that I want for the summer exactly such a place as the said advertisement describes, I know you will excuse my asking you to send me some farther particulars of it. I shall want tolerably good stables, you know, and should like to take it for one year certain, if it should prove to be the sort of thing I want. Can I be accommodated at any rustic hostelry in the neighbourhood, if I come down to look at it? And may I look to you to guide my steps, and instruct my ignorance, if I present myself at your door? With my best compliments to Mrs. Markham, I remain faithfully yours, *****.' And now, Constance, whom do you think it is from?"

"A more idle question you surely never asked, Penelope. How in the world should I be able to guess?"

The tone in which these words were spoken was intended to be as indifferent as the words themselves, but it was not so; and the old lady, whose ears were as quick as ever, looked at her keenly for a moment, and then exclaimed, "Mercy on me, Constance! You do not suspect that it comes from that fantastical fellow Mortimer, do you? Remember, my dear, if renewed proposals should come from him and from William Weston, I shall throw all my might and interest on the side of the latter."

"Very well, grandmamma—we shall not quarrel on that point, I believe. But I do not suspect that this letter comes from Mr. Mortimer."

"Some other person has occurred to you as more likely, perhaps?" returned Mrs. Markham, fixing her eyes upon her.

"Every name I ever heard I should think more likely than that of Mr. Mortimer," replied Constance, turning back the pages she had been reading, as if in search of some particular passage.

"Never mind the Quarterly, just for five minutes, Constance," said her friend. "I must go towards the post-office to meet Markham, and I want first to hear you say whom you think this letter is from."

"I don't know," replied Constance concisely.

"Does that mean, my dear, that you do not positively know who it is from? or that you do not know whom you think it is from?"

"Upon my word, Penelope, I do not think about it," said Constance, with a little movement of impatience; "perhaps it is from Daniel O'Connell."

"No, my love, Markham is not in correspondence with Daniel O'Connell. Guess again, Constance."

"There is some joke between you girls that I cannot understand," said Mrs. Ridley, looking from one to the other. "Constance looks almost in a passion, and you, Penelope, look very much as if you enjoyed it. Upon my word, you are both of you very provoking. I wish

you would put an end to all this foolery, and tell me at once who this person is, who seems likely to become our neighbour?"

"The letter, ma'am," replied Penelope, placing it as she spoke before the old lady, but with her eyes still furtively directed towards her friend, "the letter is from Mr. Fitzosborne, the gentleman to whom my husband owes his promotion."

"Indeed, my dear! Well, then, I do call that very good news. I have not forgotten what John Markham said about him. He must be a noble fellow, that is certain. But I really don't see the object of your joke about making Constance guess. How could she guess, my dear?"

Constance was by this time earnestly engaged in looking at some animal or vegetable production which she had found, or expected to find, on the outside of the glass door, and had very much the air of intending to walk off; but she was probably prevented by the conversation which followed between her grandmother and Mrs. Markham.

"I thought," said the latter, "you would be pleased to hear that Markham's generous friend was likely to come among us. And in truth I came charged with a message from my mother, which will prove to you that we reckon upon your sympathy, my dear Mrs. Ridley. Of course we cannot let one to whom we owe all our happiness take up his quarters at the *humble hostelry* he talks of, and Markham has therefore written to tell him that his humble hostelry must be our humble home. Now this we can in no way contrive, unless you will take pity on us, and let Betsy and Mary come here to sleep as long as he stays."

"To be sure I will, my dear, and delighted to do it. But stay," continued the warm-hearted old lady, "I think we can manage better than that, too. Let Mr. Fitzosborne come here. We are too near and dear friends, I hope, to make it appear extraordinary that my large house should be open to eke out your small one."

It was evident that notwithstanding the earnest attention of Constance to the object she was examining outside the door, she was not out of hearing, either in mind or body, for at this moment she suddenly turned round, and said abruptly, "No, no, dear grandmamma! do not propose that. Let Betsy and Mary come here. I shall be so glad to have them! And besides it will be so much pleasanter for the two friends to be together."

Penelope listened and looked at her, and something like a smile seemed to threaten a jesting reply, but she checked herself, and said, with every appearance of being in earnest, "Thank you a thousand times, my dear Mrs. Ridley, but I think Constance is right. I dare say Mr. Fitzosborne will not stay very long, and I know that Markham would be sorry to lose an hour of his company."

"Well, well, let it be exactly as you think most agreeable and most convenient," replied Mrs. Ridley. "A room for the dear girls shall be ready whenever they like to come."

"Thank you a thousand times," returned Penelope, preparing to depart, but pausing for a moment before she passed through the door, she said to her friend, "Will you take a walk with me, Constance, towards the post-office, to meet Markham?"

"No, thank you, dear Penelope. I would rather not walk this morning," was the reply.

TRAFALGAR.

BY THE HONOURABLE JULIA AUGUSTA MAYNARD.

THE fleet-wing'd ships in full array
Impatient chide each brief delay.
On! on! ye brave; to battle fly!
Go forth to death or victory!

The thund'ring cannon's opening roar
Reverberates from sea to shore;
And dark as earth's primeval night,
The blackness of that sulphurous fight.

The battle rages—fiercely shine
The flashing sabres through each line:
And o'er each deck, and o'er each prow,
The crimson flood shall quickly flow.

The shock, the din, the madd'ning strife,
Unsated but with human life,
Shall surely doom, where many meet,
Each surge to be a winding-sheet!

Now furiously the weapons clash,
Now onward gallant spirits dash,
Till slaughter'd heaps and oozing gore
Reveal that valour lives no more.

Each brow is black with demon hate,
And mercy's voice entreats too late:
Each stroke is death; each eye of fire
Shall gleam in triumph, or expire.

And carnage reign'd; and warriors fell,
The cannon's roar their only knell,
Until a deeper, sadder cry
Rose with the voice of victory.

One awful burst—the bolt hath sped!
'Tis done!—Immortal Nelson's dead!
The mighty chief, the glorious star
Of conquest and of Trafalgar!

THE BACHELOR OF FIFTY.

BY CHARLES DE BERNARD.

THERE are, in the fashionable quarters of Paris, certain spots, which recall to mind the terrace on which sister Anne kept watch in the castle of Bluebeard. In fine weather, at the hour when ladies walk or drive, pay visits or shop, an observant person cannot pass the places to which we allude, without remarking there a considerable number of individuals of the male sex, generally young, sometimes with an air of distinction, and always as correct in their dress as the lover in a vaudeville. In proportion as their temper is feverish or phlegmatic, these interesting personages remain motionless as statues, or measure out with irregular steps a limited space, like a soldier at his post. Amongst these volunteer sentinels, there are some who, while on duty, make no discovery save that the grass would be green if the sun did not make it dusty, and these in general return to their quarters with an air of deep melancholy. Others, more fortunate, finish by gathering the fruits of their patience, and see their anxious expectation rewarded by the charms of that period, called, in the euphuistic style of our forefathers, the hour of the swain.

To this latter class belonged a young man, of very good mien, who some years since, about the middle of March, had taken his station, and seemed likely to take root, at the entrance of the Tuileries Gardens, opposite to the Rue Castiglione. From two o'clock till four, at that season when the genial rays of the spring sun kiss and gild the green buds of the limes and the chestnut-trees, this spot provides for inflammatory beings a resort scarcely less inviting than the *balcon* of the opera in the evening. The Allée des Feuillans, in fact, then disputes with the Bois de Boulogne the privilege of exhibiting its swarms of youthful beauties, who flock thither to expose their pale cheeks and eyes heavy with the sleepless nights of the winter campaign to the vivifying influence of a pure air and a fresh breeze. Countless, therefore, are also the *paletots* and the *rédingotes* of all shades and colours, from *noir de fumée* to *blanc de farine*, which at that favoured hour make their appearance in the gardens. The infantry of fashion, in particular, are collected there from the four points of the compass. Those alleys would almost seem to be their peculiar property, with such majesty do they tread them. They recognize, there, no superiority; not even that of the dashing sportsmen of the Jockey Club, to whom, elsewhere, they unhesitatingly yield precedence, for self-esteem varies according to the scene for its display, and many a man bows low on the first floor, who would draw himself up with dignity on the second. In the Champs Elysées, the horseman who canters along the road, though his steed be but a hack, eclipses the modest *piéton* of the foot-path; but in the Tuileries these distinctions are swept away. The gates which admit poodles, led in chains or silken leashes, are closed inexorably against horses; and

every loungee is estimated at his own personal value, and no more. On the gravel-walk of the Feuillans all boots are equal, whether adorned or unadorned with spurs.

The young man, whose stillness we have described, appeared completely isolated in the midst of the crowd which the attractions of the bright sunshine had tempted forth. In vain did the most brilliant equipages stop at the entrance of the gardens; in vain did the most beautiful women almost touch him as they rushed by; nothing could distract his attention from the point on which it was fixed. Leaning against the iron gate, a few paces distant from the sentry-box which bears the number 33, his eyes were invariably turned in the direction of the Rue de la Paix. If they wandered for a moment from their line of observation, it was but to consult his watch, whose hands seemed to him, as to all who wait impatiently, to lag and loiter lazily on the dial. In about half an hour his countenance, which had been clouding over for some minutes, suddenly cleared up. At that instant, a brown landau, drawn by a pair of handsome grays, appeared from behind the Colonne Vendôme. Notwithstanding the distance, the young man recognised the carriage at a glance, and watched its approach with a meaning smile. He allowed it to enter the Rue de Rivoli before he changed his position, and then commenced walking along the terrace at a slow pace, yielding to a feeling of prudence, which lovers would do well always to obey.

The landau drew up at the gate, and three persons alighted from it. The first was a man of about thirty, with a stiff gait and a countenance of assumed gravity, who affected maturity of age with as much study as older people employ to put on an appearance of youth. Dressed in black from head to foot, his throat encased in a white cravat, his face scrupulously shaven, his eyes protected by spectacles which cast a bluish tinge upon his doughy cheeks, he exhibited in himself a characteristic specimen of that class, so important at the present day, which from taste, calling, or ambition, devotes itself to the studies of the closet. Advocate or journalist, magistrato or man of letters, this individual, be his profession what it might, carried his head so high, spoke in a tone so decisive, threw out occasionally from behind his spectacles a glance so peremptory,—in a word, seemed so secure of his superiority, that those who saw him for the first time must have been of a very sceptical nature not to feel the same conviction.

The second person who got out of the carriage was considerably older than the first. He must have been very handsome twenty years before, and although his gray hair announced the decline of middle age, he yet preserved those advantages of appearance which age sometimes respects, whilst it destroys all the rest. His figure was noble, and his features remarkably distinguished. You would have sought in vain, either in his person or dress, for any of those fruitless artifices which men, growing old unwillingly, employ, to impose on others the illusions with which they flatter their own vanity. In him everything was simple yet elegant, serious yet unaffected. The habitually sad expression of his countenance might, it is true, give rise to the supposition that he had not said farewell to the pleasures of

youth without regret ; but that very gravity was not without its charm, and it was difficult to observe him attentively, without experiencing those sensations at once sweet and melancholy, which the pale serenity of a fine evening in autumn inspires.

Instead of imitating his companion, who had already entered the gardens, the elder of the two gentlemen turned to offer his hand to a third person, whose beauty alone satisfactorily explained the long-expectant watching of the first actor in our tale. She was one of those young and supereminently Parisian women, who combine with natural charms all those conventional graces which modern education develops, at the expense, sometimes, of less brilliant but more solid advantages ; false diamonds, it may be, but so well cut, and set with so much taste, that it requires more cynicism than men commonly possess, to seek for and lay bare their defects. This attractive creature, whose fair hair harmonized well with her soft brown eyes and delicate complexion, wore a dress of maure-coloured silk, and over it a short cloak of black velvet, trimmed with ermine. A hat of the same material as the cloak, and an ermine muff, completed a costume well suited to the temperature of the day, which partook at once of the bright sunshine of spring and the crisp frostiness of winter.

On alighting from the carriage, the young lady took the arm which her remaining escort offered, and mounted with a light step the stairs which lead to the terrace of the Feuillans. She had hardly passed the gate, when, without turning her head, she cast to the right one rapid glance, which fixed itself at once with admirable precision on the gentleman whose motions we before described, and who had halted at no great distance. He, no doubt, expected the recognition, for he returned the glance with a very expressive look. The fair beauty blushed slightly, and raised her hand to her face, as though she would confine within the front of her hat the silky ringlets, which, however, showed no inclination to stray. At the same moment the gentleman who accompanied her pressed her arm, perhaps involuntarily, and struck his gold-headed cane impatiently upon the ground.

"Is anything the matter, M. de Morsy ?" asked the lady, with an air of astonishment.

"I will tell you when your husband has left us," answered he, and his eyebrows contracted as he spoke.

"Why not before him ? I have no secrets from M. Gastoul."

"I trust it may be so, madame," said M. de Morsy ; but there was a sadness in his tone, which softened the severity of the words.

The man in spectacles walked onwards, with eyes fixed on the ground, and arms crossed behind his back, à la Napoleon. With the real or affected absence of mind of one whose brain is meditating on the fate of nations, and has no thoughts to waste on vulgar objects, he crossed the principal alley at right angles, merely addressing a vague bow to the crowds of both sexes whose progress he interrupted. This laborious passage accomplished, he paused at the edge of the chestnut-trees, and there awaited his companions, who, by mutual consent, cut short their conversation before rejoining him.

"I must now leave you," said he, as they approached. "Marquis,

I entrust madame to the care of your chivalrous politeness, and delegate all my authority over her to you."

"You are determined, then, on going to the chamber?" said the young lady, whose eyes wandered inquiringly from her husband to the terrace which runs parallel with the Rue de Rivoli.

"I cannot be off going, *ma cherè amie*," answered M. Gastoul, with vulgarly conjugal familiarity; "the sitting of to-day is one of peculiar interest; the reduction of the *rentes* is to be discussed, and as this is a subject on which I have bestowed some attention, I shall not be sorry to hear how our honourable representatives will acquit themselves in the debate. Besides, M. Barrot is to speak, and it is important that I should be there to compliment him."

"You are certain then, beforehand, that his speech will contain matter deserving your compliments?" said the marquis, in a satirical tone.

"What do you take me for?" cried the gentleman in spectacles, chuckling as he spoke. "Do I not know the duties imposed upon me in my capacity of candidate for a seat in the chamber? I have no inclination to miscarry at Limoges, for want of a passport signed by the illustrious leader of the *côté gauche*."

"I thought that business was settled."

"Is any business ever settled with people of that description? For this week past I have been sent backwards and forwards, from pillar to post. My address to the electors was prepared; it wanted nothing but to be properly indorsed, when, at the moment I fancied success certain, an opponent starts up in my path."

"An opponent?"

"Yes; after having obtained the votes of almost the entire committee, I find myself made a cat's-paw for the advantage of a fellow whose sole merit consists in being the son of a member of the Convention, and in possessing a million of national property."

"But it seems to me that this gives a man some claims," said the marquis with affected gravity.

"Claims!" interrupted M. Gastoul sharply: "I will explain to you my adversary's real claims to the protection of the party who have set him up in opposition to me. They are, that he is a dunce, a blockhead, a lump of wax that they can mould into any shape they please; whilst in me they cannot hope to find the same pliancy, the same docility. I have had the imprudence to allow them to take my measure beforehand, and, vanity apart, it seems that I am some inches above their standard height. I am found too independent for a liberal. In the eyes of certain persons this is an unpardonable fault; it may be that their precautions are not quite causeless; let me be but once returned—"

Instead of finishing his phrase, the expectant deputy shot forth from beneath his spectacles one of those imperial glances, the power of which he considered irresistible. "However, as my election is not yet secured," continued he contemptuously, "I must go play my part as parliamentary applauder. Stoop to conquer! This is the first commandment in the political decalogue."

"*Omnia serviliter pro dominatione*," said M. de Morsy, smiling.

"Eh! what, you quote Tacitus? Upon my word, for a marquis of sixteen descents that is not so bad. But the sitting must have commenced, and I shall lose half the debate. Sans adieu!"

Mr. Gastoul kissed the tips of his fingers to the couple whom he left behind, and walked rapidly towards the Pont Tournaut. The marquis and the young wife entrusted to his charge watched his progress for a few moments; they then returned up the broad walk, and proceeded a few steps without a word being spoken on either side. Madame Gastoul was the first to break a silence which was becoming embarrassing to both.

"I am very glad to be alone with you an instant," she said with a forced smile. "For several days I have wished to scold you, and the present opportunity is so favourable for my purpose that I cannot allow it to escape."

"In that case," answered M. de Morsy, "commence your lecture at once, for our *tête-à-tête* will not be of long duration."

"If you fear that we should meet any of my acquaintance in this crowd, we can turn into another walk."

"Go where we may, there is one person whom we cannot avoid meeting."

"Who may that person be?" inquired the lady, assuming an air of surprise.

"The gentleman to whom, on entering the gardens, you granted permission to join you in your walk."

A sudden blush overspread the cheek of Madame Gastoul, and she hesitated for a moment before she replied.

"To whom I granted permission to join me?" she said at length, with an appearance of constraint.

"I shall be only too glad to find myself mistaken," answered the gentleman of fifty, with something very like a sigh.

"I grant such a permission! I, who have not spoken a syllable to any one but yourself!"

"There is a language in which words are not required."

"The language des fleurs, perhaps? Are we then in Paris or in Persia? I am really in doubt, when I hear phrases so mysterious and so enigmatical."

To this sally, pronounced with assumed gaiety, the marquis made no reply, but fixed his eyes on the face of his companion with a glance so penetrating that she looked down in evident confusion.

"My devotion to you gives me courage even to displease you," said he at length; "the truth which another might fear to tell you, you shall hear from me; yes, from me, though it should cost me your friendship."

M. de Morsy remained silent for a moment, as though he expected an interruption; then seeing that his companion spoke not, and indeed appeared scarcely to listen to him, he continued, and his voice betrayed the agitation which he felt.

"Is it possible that, with your fine tact and keen sense of the ridiculous, you have not already seen through the mask behind which M. d'Epenoy would fain conceal his presumptuous and incurable folly?"

"M. d'Epenoy! is he then the text on which this homily is preached?" interposed Madame Gastoul with a forced smile.

"I entreat you, madame," again resumed the marquis, "in consideration of the deep interest I take in your welfare, and above all, for the sake of your self-respect, be candid with me; if otherwise, you will but make a sacrifice of your sincerity without convincing me. It is clear that after having ridiculed, or at least affected to ridicule, the assiduities of M. d'Epenoy, you accept of them very seriously at present."

"There is one thing which I cannot accept seriously; that is the language you now hold. You have vowed to put me out of temper, but you will not succeed; I feel endowed to-day with the patience of an angel."

"What you say encourages me to proceed. This, then, since you allow me to speak without reserve, has been the conduct you have pursued with regard to the person in question; you first accepted his attentions as a jest, you next endured them as a habit, and you will end by encouraging them in sober earnest."

"Encourage them, sir!" exclaimed the lady in a tone indicative of anything rather than the angelic state of mind of which she had boasted a moment before.

"If I knew a word more suited to express what I have remarked this morning, be assured, madame, that I should have employed it."

"To what do you allude? Explain yourself, I entreat. You torture me with your mysterious allusions. What has occurred? for God's sake tell me!"

"Nothing but what happens daily in this place," answered the marquis, returning the anxious and irritated looks of Madame Gastoul with a smile full of bitterness. "You desire to come to the Tuileries; on so fine a day, what can be more natural than such a wish? M. d'Epenoy chances to be at the garden-gate the moment you arrive; what more common than such a coincidence? The instant you perceive him, you raise your hand to your forehead; what more simple than such a movement? And if M. d'Epenoy, attributing to that gesture a meaning previously concerted, reads in it a permission to join you in your walk; if, having satisfied himself that your husband has gone to the Palais Bourbon, he were at this moment following us, regulating his pace by ours; if, in a word, we were to meet as we return down the alley, and he were to address you with self-gratulations on the happy chance which made him choose the path in which he finds you;—must not one be very suspicious, very ridiculous, very unjust, to put an unfavourable construction on this coincidence of fortuitous circumstances, or to see premeditation in what is the effect of chance alone?"

Pretty women find their mentors a degree less agreeable than young men do their travelling tutors—that is to say, they cordially detest them. As she listened to the caustic interpretation which construed a meeting so innocent in appearance into a positive assignation, Madame Gastoul internally cursed the sagacity of the gray-beard on whose arm she leant. At that moment she almost regretted the absence of her husband, whose forte was not penetration, and

who could spare neither time nor attention to scrutinize so mercilessly the actions of his wife. However, far from allowing the marquis to perceive her annoyance, she raised her eyes to his face, with a half-conscious, half-angry expression, and, in a voice rendered still more fascinating by a slight tone of vexation, said, "You treat me very ill—you, whom I thought my friend. And with what unjust severity! To judge by what you say, I must appear unamiable, nay, odious; and yet what is my offence? Is it my fault if M. d'Epenoy chooses to walk to-day in the Tuileries? Moreover, is it quite certain that he is here at all?"

"O madame!" interposed the marquis.

"Well, then, admitting that it is so, can I prevent his going where he chooses?"

"No; but when he comes to join you, you can prevent his engaging you in a long conversation; and this is what I earnestly request of you, for the sake of your own reputation."

They had reached the end of the walk. Madame Gastoul turned sharply round with an impatient movement, which betrayed the irritation she felt at the admonitions of her guardian.

"Your intentions are excellent, I doubt not," said she; "but I cannot admit that the advice you offer me is either necessary or well timed. I persist in believing that M. d'Epenoy is not here, or, if he be here, and we meet here, that he will be satisfied with bowing as he passes."

"We shall see that directly, for here he is."

Madame Gastoul had no need of this information to perceive, threading the crowd before them, the happy mortal whose attentions she was accused of receiving too favourably. Fulfilling the predictions of the marquis to the letter, M. d'Epenoy approached slowly with an air of perfect unconsciousness. The nonchalance with which he glanced from side to side announced nothing of the impatient eagerness of a lover. They were already within a few paces of each other, and he seemed on the point of passing Madame Gastoul without recognition, when suddenly, without the slightest appearance of premeditation, his eye turned in the direction which brought her within his scope of vision. His features, far from expressing the emotion inseparable, it is said, from true passion, exhibited an expression of quiet pleasure not unmixed with surprise. He took off his hat, and approached the lady with an ease as full of respect as it was free from formality.

"This is indeed a happy chance, madame," said M. d'Epenoy with his sweetest smile.

He could not have commenced the conversation in a manner less likely to make a favourable impression. The ironical prediction of the marquis made the trivial phrase appear ridiculous in the extreme. Vexed at the awkwardness of the man who aspired to her favour, Madame Gastoul replied only by a look of dissatisfaction, whilst M. de Morsy was at no pains to conceal his merriment.

M. d'Epenoy looked in surprise from one to the other, but instead of being disconcerted, as a man less assured of his own importance might have been, he bowed familiarly to the marquis, and bending

again towards the lady, "If I thank my good fortune," he said, giving a graceful turn to his original phrase, "it is, because, in addition to the pleasure which the sight of you always affords, it frees me to-day from a load of anxiety. You were taken suddenly ill yesterday evening at the Hôtel Castellane. The mob that crowded the apartments prevented my approach, and when I learned that you had returned home, I feared that you might be severely unwell."

"'Twas very nearly so, in consequence of the mortification that foolish accident caused me," replied Madame Gastoul. "I hold fainting fits in abhorrence, for I know how few people are charitable enough to believe them genuine. However, I assure you that mine was not a scene got up to make myself interesting, and that the heat of the room in which I was, alone occasioned it."

Whilst Madame Gastoul was speaking, M. d'Epenoy had placed himself by her side with the intention of inducing her to continue a walk, in which he hoped to accompany her. M. de Morsy remarked the manœuvre, but instead of insuring its success by moving forwards, he leant heavily on his cane, and remained as immovable as a ship riding at anchor.

Madame Gastoul, whether from reserve, prudence, or timidity, did not venture to take the initiative which the gesture of her lover hinted at. Furious with the marquis, whose hostile penetration had more than once seen through and baffled his designs, almost equally enraged with the object of his passion, who, far from coming to his assistance, seemed to desire his absence, M. d'Epenoy resolved not to allow himself to be dismissed like a raw school-boy. With an attitude of quiet decision, his countenance irradiated with an imperturbable smile, he courageously renewed the conversation.

"I trust, madame," said he, "that your indisposition has entirely left you, and that you will not be prevented from going to Madame Davesne's ball this evening."

"I have danced rather too much lately," answered Madame Gastoul, "and my physician has imposed some little restraint upon me; but, as the transition from a ball every night to absolute repose would be rather too sudden, he has given me permission to go to the theatre. I am allowed to be my own mistress until eleven o'clock, but no longer. On this point the doctor is inexorable."

"You will, then, be at the theatre this evening?" resumed the gentleman in a lower tone.

"Probably; I have not yet seen Chatterton."

These words, uttered in an accent of the most perfect indifference, were accompanied by a rapid glance, in which any man with the slightest tact might have read this clear injunction—"You know where to find me this evening—now leave me."

M. d'Epenoy knew that there was no appeal from an order so plain and so little discouraging. Satisfied with the information he had gained, he took leave of Madame Gastoul, and departed, bowing to the gentleman of fifty winters with that air of banter which lovers, in the flush of their success, willingly adopt to mock at ill-timed and impertinent curiosity, envy, jealousy, and all the other amiable passions with which the atmosphere of gallantry abounds.

Madame Gastoul and the marquis continued their walk in silence for some time after M. d' Epenoy had left them. The lady, in her turn, seemed determined not to be the first to speak. This silence, which M. de Morsy attributed to a feeling of sadness at the departure of the object of her love, redoubled his chagrin, and he at last broke it with a painful attempt to appear gay.

"I trust, madame," said he, "that you will not refuse to me the favour which you have just granted to M. d' Epenoy, and that you will permit me also to pay a visit this evening in your box at the Français?"

"Why, this is better and better," cried Madame Gastoul, who could no longer conceal her vexation. "A moment ago I was only accused of allowing M. d' Epenoy to speak to me in a public promenade—now I am found guilty of going to the theatre for the purpose of meeting him. Henceforth I shall not dare to open my lips or to move a finger in your presence. I cannot raise my hand to arrange my hair, but you see in it a telegraphic signal; I cannot utter the most common-place phrase, but you construe it into a rendezvous that I grant. Allow me to tell you, M. de Morsy, that you carry your spirit of interpretation a little too far. Upon my word, you should have been in Spain in the days of the auto-da-fé;—with your exquisite talent for giving a criminal colouring to the most indifferent actions, you would have made an admirable inquisitor."

"Madame," replied the marquis, apparently unmoved by her sarcasms, "when I resolved to speak frankly to you, I resigned myself to the endurance of your anger. I must fulfil my task, even at the risk of increasing your displeasure. It is a duty I owe to friendship, to enlighten that inexperience which alone blinds you to the dangers of your position. Had you lived longer in the world, you would not need my counsels, but, young and inexperienced as you are, do not, I beseech you, turn a deaf ear to them. Forgive me if I repeat, that the encouragement you give to the attentions of M. d' Epenoy is more than imprudent—it is dangerous."

"The perils of which you speak can have no existence for a virtuous woman," said Madame Gastoul proudly.

"Ah! madame, this is not a question of virtue, but of reputation. It is unnecessary to remind me of the respect I owe you—would that every one who knows you were equally alive to it! I tremble to think that the slightest equivocal appearance may compromise it. Society, as you well know, cares only for appearances. Indulgent to vice, it is without pity for imprudence. In the eyes of the world, innocence is of little importance—reputation is everything."

"Would you give me to understand that mine is tarnished?"

"Is it not enough that it should be endangered?"

"And why? Because, living in the same society with M. d'Epenoy, I occasionally meet him at the houses of our mutual friends?"

"Rather because, meeting M. d'Epenoy, not occasionally, but constantly, night after night, from month's end to month's end, you have, by degrees, allowed him to assume towards you that sort of intimacy, the entire innocence of which the world never admits."

"Do not speak to me of the world—it is detestable."

"It often is so, I allow; but, just or unjust, it is your judge, and from its decision there is no appeal. A man may brave its decrees—a woman's part is to submit."

Madame Gastoul silently acquiesced in the truth of this opinion; she hung down her head, and made no answer.

"I may possibly have spoken with too much severity," resumed M. de Morsy, in an agitated tone. "To you, conscious of your own innocence, my alarms may appear unreasonable—unjust; if so, remember that a friendship such as mine deserves some indulgence, and forgive me."

The young lady raised her head, and meeting the eyes of the marquis fixed upon her with an expression of tenderness which simple friendship does not usually display, she said, with a smile of doubtful meaning,

"I will forgive you, but on two conditions;—first, that you will torment me no more about M. d'Epenoy, whose agreeable manners will never trouble my peace of mind—who, in short, does not in any way justify your apprehensions; secondly—"

"Secondly?" repeated M. de Morsy, looking at her attentively.

"Secondly," continued Madame Gastoul, with an air of decision very different from her previous hesitation—"that you will have the goodness to allow me to spend the remainder of the spring in Paris, according to my original intention."

"On what motives could I ground any interference with your arrangements, or what power have I to interfere, even if I wished it?" inquired the marquis, whose anxious brow was again overclouded.

"On what motives? Surely, after your late remonstrances, you do not ask the question seriously. And for your power, you have but to use, or rather abuse, the influence you possess over M. Gastoul, to persuade him to transport the head-quarters of his electioneering operations to Limoges."

"Your husband has spoken to you on this subject then?"

"I am happy to tell you that M. Gastoul does repose some confidence in me."

"It is well," retorted the marquis, evidently annoyed. "And allowing that I did recommend him to return, for two or three months, to the department in which his property lies, and which he aspires to represent, can you deny that my advice is prudent and reasonable? The deputy whom he hopes to replace is given over by his physicians, and, even if he live, his resignation is beyond a doubt—it may be communicated to the Chamber at any moment. If your husband wishes to secure his election, he must take measures to augment the number of his supporters. For this purpose, my opinion is that he ought rather to be at Limoges than in Paris. I may be mistaken, but my intentions are good, and I am not aware that they require any apology."

By one of those ready manœuvres which women bring into play with so much tact, and generally with such complete success, the grounds of the discussion had been lifted. From being the attacking party, M. de Morsy found himself reduced to act on the defensive,

and here, as is usually the case with men, he acquitted himself very ill. Madame Gastoul took care not to compromise the advantage she had gained by neglecting to follow it up.

"Whom do you expect to convince that you take serious interest in M. Gastoul's success?" asked she, with an incredulous smile. "The little interest you take in politics is too well known. What care you whether the *côté droit* or the *côté gauche* lose or gain a vote? No, no; your anxiety is not to send M. Gastoul to Limoges, to canvass his constituents, but to drive me out of Paris. Allow me to inquire your object in so doing?"

"It is for your own sake, madame, for the sake of your reputation," answered the marquis, in a tone of deep feeling.

"And what right have you to busy yourself with my reputation?" retorted the young lady, growing more and more animated. "A husband, a father, a brother even, may claim a right to watch over and direct a woman's conduct; but in you I can recognize no such right, and your guardianship is an usurpation to which I am resolved not to submit."

"Would you, then, deprive friendship of its dearest privilege?"

"Friendship!—poor friendship! for how many failings is it made answerable! But let us mutually understand the meaning of this word. Friendship, in my sense of the term, is gentle, obliging, discreet, charitable; in yours it is suspicious, moody, intolerant, fault-finding. Jealousy, injustice, nay, ill-breeding, may be borne with in love, but they are incompatible with my idea of friendship."

Madame Gastoul accompanied these words with a glance so searching, that M. de Morsy, with a bashfulness little seen in persons of his age, was fain to turn away to avoid encountering it.

"You are right," said he at length, in evident embarrassment, "we do not understand each other. You will not allow friendship to be anything more than habitual companionship, whilst I feel that it may become a passion."

"In that case I pity it!" exclaimed the young lady quickly. "In becoming a passion, it has everything to lose, and nothing to gain. I would advise friendship always to keep within its proper sphere of moderation and calmness. But," continued she, in a far gentler tone, "this dissertation is carrying us away from our subject. Let us return to it, if you please. Stripped of all the romantic circumstances with which your imagination would invest it, the case stands thus:—a poor young woman, educated in a convent, and buried from the moment of her marriage in the wilds and mountains of the Limousin, falls desperately in love with Paris, to whose delights, although it is her native place, she has hitherto been a stranger. Is there anything strange in this? Is it not the history of my life, and the life of every girl educated as I have been? Six months of freedom in Paris! Am I not right to prolong so pleasant a dream to the latest possible moment? Think of me as you choose. I am resolved not to forego a single day that my husband has promised me. These six months are my holidays, and I will enjoy them to the last hour. And after all, what great harm am I doing? Is it an unpardonable weakness, at two-and-twenty, to love dancing, music, the theatre, so-

ciety—in a word, to enjoy myself? Is it a crime of very deep dye to wander, like a bee, from shrub to flower, culling agreeable recollections to enliven my poor hive, where all is so dull and lonely? M. Gastoul is the first to feel all this, and to encourage me to amuse myself—why should you blame what he approves?”

“Because a friend’s eyes see more clearly than a husband’s.”

“Because you are as unkind as he is indulgent. Yes, you must, indeed, be hard-hearted, thus to grudge the fresh air and sunshine to a prisoner—for our chateau, as you well know, is little better than a prison. Come now, my good M. de Morsy,” continued she, in a coaxing tone, “will you try to make yourself agreeable? Do you wish me to believe in your friendship, and to give you mine in return?”

“What would you have me do?” asked the marquis.

“First smile, instead of looking as grave as a displeased chaperon,” answered Madame Gastoul, smiling herself with irresistible sweetness, “and then have some compassion for a poor girl, who delights in dancing, and would be in despair at leaving a ball before the cotillon. You do not know that I have just got three most becoming new dresses. To keep them for the Limousin would be sacrilege; even you must allow that. I am sure you will admire them, and you know how much I value your taste. You see now that it would be cruel to disappoint me—you have not the heart to do so; promise me not to renew your advice to M. Gastoul to return to Limoges; nay, more than this, you must promise me that, if he speaks to you again on the subject, you will employ all your influence to dissuade him from so odious a plan. This will be the easiest thing in the world, for nothing can exceed his deference for your opinion. You will do what I ask, will you not? Now, promise me that you will.”

It required far more insensibility than the tender heart of M. de Morsy could boast, to resist the tone, the looks, the persuasive smiles, with which this request was urged. Nevertheless, far from yielding, he shook his head in token of refusal.

“Your words confirm all my fears on your behalf,” said he sorrowfully. “Paris has its claims, no doubt; but all its pleasures are as nothing in comparison with one absorbing attraction. Do not deny it. I see it but too clearly. However blind your husband may be, it is not my business to open his eyes, but I cannot and will not assist you in deceiving him.”

During the conversation Madame Gastoul had occasion more than once to summon to her aid those twin virtues, patience and prudence, which are so indispensably necessary to a woman who is inclined to stray from the right path. In humbling herself to entreat where she was accustomed to command, in lavishing her utmost graciousness on a man who claimed a right to censure her conduct—a right always odious, even where it is legitimate, but doubly revolting where it is usurped and unauthorised—she had great difficulty in restraining her natural warmth of temper, and imposing silence on her pride. Already weary of the part she played, she was offended beyond measure at the severe terms in which the marquis concluded. Her eyes shot fire, and the meaning smile which curled her lip seemed the forerunner

of one of those cutting replies, for which women, when urged beyond their patience, are never at a loss. By a violent effort Madame Gastoul repressed the sally which was about to burst from her, and, with features composed and brow smooth as a marble statue, quietly said, "I have some visits to pay before dinner; will you be good enough to take me to the carriage?"

The advice of the marquis had been too ill received to encourage him to prolong the conversation, although he did not despair of renewing it with success at a more propitious moment. He bowed his head to signify his obedience to her orders, and turned at once in the direction of the gate. As they crossed the gardens, not a word was spoken on either side, and when they reached the carriage, Madame Gastoul quitted the arm of the marquis and got into it, with all the eagerness of a child escaping from the grasp of his pedagogue. This movement brought a half smile to the lips of M. de Morsy, and before the door was shut he leant over towards Madame Gastoul, and said in a low tone,

"Do you quite hate me?"

"Why will you not do what I desire?" replied she discontentedly.

"What you desire! you know too well that it is impossible."

"I know one thing, and you ought to know it also, namely, that I cannot bear to be contradicted; and since you pretend to be my friend, I think you might treat me with a little more indulgence; for even if I am sometimes capricious and thoughtless, that is no reason—"

Madame Gastoul paused and hesitated, as though her attention were distracted, and the thread of her ideas broken. The marquis remarked, too, that whilst she spoke to him she was looking in another direction; and turning his head he at once perceived M. d'Epenoy, who had taken up his old position behind the gate. With a cold bow to the lady, he walked quickly back into the gardens. Far from avoiding the encounter, M. d'Epenoy, his countenance radiant with smiles, advanced at once to meet him.

"I was looking for you," he said, in a tone of easy familiarity; "I have a message, which I forgot to deliver to you just now."

"A message?" said the marquis, striving to appear calm.

"Yes. My mother wishes to see you at your earliest convenience. I suppose it is about some matrimonial negotiation, in which your assistance is wanted. You know that she makes a dozen matches a year, on an average. I wonder M. de Foy does not bring an action against her for invasion of privilege. She is the providence of inconsolable widows and despairing old maids; and when she has not arranged a first interview, superintended the purchase of a *corbeille*, or discussed the preliminaries of a marriage settlement, she feels, like Titus, that she has lost a day. She would have written to you, but as she knows that a day seldom passes without our meeting, she allowed me to be the bearer of her request. If you have time to go to her to-day, you will be sure to find her at home."

"I will go at once," said M. de Morsy, absently.

As he spoke, Madame Gastoul's carriage drove away. The two gentlemen watched it until it was out of sight, when M. d'Epenoy resumed the conversation with an air of raillery.

"Upon my word, M. le Marquis," said he, "you have a great deal to answer for in the jealous feelings to which you give rise. I know that many a man, myself amongst the number, envied the office you held just now. But, if I may judge by the cold reception you give me, any one who wished to share it with you would meet with no encouragement on your part. Not that I mean this as a reproach. I am perfectly conscious that if I had the distinguished honour of being the *cavalier* of so charming a person as Madame Gastoul, any rival would have but little politeness to expect at my hands. But, alas! my good manners are not likely to be put to so trying a proof; such a triumph can never fall to my lot."

The implied sarcasm of M. d'Epenoy was not calculated to allay the irritable feelings of the marquis. He was about to answer with an intemperance little suitable to his time of life, when the dialogue was unceremoniously cut short by the arrival of a third person: it was M. Gastoul.

"Well! what has become of my wife?" asked he, surprised at her disappearance.

"Madame Gastoul had some visits to pay," replied M. de Morsy: "I have just left her. So you did not remain at the chamber until the end of the sitting?"

"Ma foi! I soon had enough of it! Phrases, phrases, nothing but phrases! No ideas, no logic, no arrangement! *Bon jour*, M. d'Epenoy, you are quite well, I hope."

"Perfectly, I thank you;" replied the young man, who had not waited for the question to bow with all possible politeness to the husband of the woman to whose favours he aspired.

"The simplest elements of the subject disregarded, or misunderstood," continued the candidate for Limoges, criticising his future colleagues without mercy. "And they call this discussion! Moreover, marquis, I did not see my man, who is, they tell me, with the king. So that my affair is again delayed."

"Messieurs," said M. d'Epenoy, "I see you have business to talk over; I will no longer be a restraint upon you."

"Wait a moment; I had something to say to you," replied M. Gastoul, seizing him by the button as he was moving away. "O!—yes!—If you have nothing better to do this evening, come to the Français; we can have a chat there. Madame Gastoul has taken a box, and we shall have room for you. You will find us in No. 22, on the first tier."

At this matrimonial trait, M. de Morsy clasped his hands, and cast up his eyes to heaven.

"I shall not forget," said M. d'Epenoy, as laughing in his sleeve he left them.

"What is the matter?" inquired M. Gastoul of the marquis. "Are you in pain? you are as pale as death."

M. de Morsy was indeed pale—pale with agitation and wrath. Disappointed in Madame Gastoul, enraged with young d'Epenoy, his indignation was beyond control at the characteristic blundering and conjugal blindness of the man in spectacles. He was on the point of throwing away his cane, after the example of Louis XIV., lest he

might be tempted to use it ; a proceeding, which would have been as inexcusable in a bachelor to a married man, as in a king to a nobleman. Resisting this strange inclination, the marquis, who felt his patience quite exhausted, prudently resolved to expose it to no further trials.

“ Adieu ! ” said he quietly ; “ I, too, have some visits to pay.”

With these words, he rushed out of the gardens, paying no attention to the remonstrances of M. Gastoul, whom he left not a little surprised at his precipitate departure.

(To be continued.)

STANZAS.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

WHAT ! pray for her no more—the loved, the lost !
When stood she so in need of pray’rs as now ?
On the wild sea of stormy passion tost,
With lightning flashing shame around her brow ?
When innocent, my pray’rs avail’d her not,
But now in them she must not be forgot !

Tell me no more of injury and pride,
Wake not the evil spirits of my heart,
I know to feel, and know I must abide
The bitter agony of its dread smart ;
Still is her name so wonted to my pray’r,
It seems to have a birthright to be there !

That heart is like a channel for my tears,
Have fretted at its core, wasting away
The flow’rs that blossom’d on its banks for years,
Hope’s flow’rs, and love’s, brief, beautiful, and gay—
And now, alas ! it only doth retain
The thorn than rankles ever there to pain.

O, how I mind me of her form of light,
(Though darken’d o’er by crime and sorrow now,)
Shining resplendent as a vision bright,
That steals from heav’n to kiss the poet’s brow ;
There was it set in blessings, like a gem
Polish’d to grace a seraph’s diadem.

And there, though trampled on, detested, spurn’d—
It still will shine, but with a fainter ray,
As lamps that are by pious love inurn’d,
Shed a dimm’d radiance round the mould’ring clay,
Yet, all so veil’d, it will be the sole light,
That ever breaks the gloom of that heart’s night.

THE CLAIRON EMEUTE; OR, THE FRENCH STAGE IN 1765.

BY EDWARD HOWARD, AUTHOR OF "RATTLIN THE REEFER," &c.

AT the time of which we are about to speak, men's minds had already become agitated by truths ill understood, and a deep sense of injuries for which they could as yet perceive no remedy; and thus a dreary hopelessness begat wild longings for revenge, combined with a savage recklessness of despair. France was on the eve of her dreadful revolution, beggared in her finances, oppressed by a contemptible and effeminate nobility, and nourishing in her own bosom the brood of half-tigers half-vipers, which were shortly to deluge her capital with blood, and stain her memory with a continuation of crimes horrible even to record.

It was, however, the era of great men—men who brought to their species resplendent and new lights, derived both from heaven and from hell; but this alternation came too suddenly upon the masses—it first dazzled, and then drove them mad. The court, the deluded court, still persisted in its full career of vanity and tyranny, each making the other more absurd and more insupportable. The stage, that is, and always will be, not the director of the morals of the age, but merely the reflex of them, will show more plainly than any dissertation, however eloquent, that the social compact in France was ripe for dissolution, and that the gilded rottenness of the throne would soon give way, and its unhappy and weak occupant be crushed in its ruins.

But let us drop this rather too serious strain, and treat that which, though indicative of the most serious disasters, was eminently ridiculous in itself, in as light a manner as the reflections that must intrude themselves on this subject will permit of. In the April of 1765, the Parisian community were enraptured with a claptrap tragedy, called "The Siege of Calais." It was founded on the well-known incident of our conqueror Edward having resolved to wreak his vengeance upon some of the best men of that obstinately-defended town, for their pertinacity in delaying him so long in its capture. Of course, in this drama, everything that was French in it was thrice glorified, and Paris vanity was fooled up to "the top of its bent," if anybody ever yet could calculate the sublimity of its exaltation. After a cessation of theatricals for the space of three weeks during Lent, all Paris was on the point of rushing again to immortalize, by endeavouring to identify themselves with, the heroism of the heroes of Calais, when lo! the Destinies—for nothing less could stop by their interference the Gallic passion for egotism and amusement—forbade.

The intrepid Alienor, the generous Eustache, and the victorious Edward, had replenished their wardrobes, retrimmed their beards, and recovered their breath, and were "eager for the fray," again and again to prosecute the siege of that devoted town, lately so often lost and won. Well sustained by the folly and the inexhaustible patience

of the nation, they had furnished themselves with new ardour—indeed their boldness was all but sublime. Every preparation was made, and never did the attack promise greater vigour, and the defence a more glorious and obstinate resistance. But the Destinies, as we before stated, from a cloud of minute circumstances, thundered forth its irrevocable fiat, “*RAISE THE SIEGE!*”

How is it that we never could correctly remember a quotation? In what part of the brain does the organ of quotationativeness reside? Will the phrenologists turn their attention to this subject and explain—if they can? We think, judging by what they have already achieved, that they cannot. For ourselves, we have the bump of acquisitiveness most monstrously developed, and yet we are poorer than an author righteously should be—how poor that is, let the prisons and the cross-roads determine. This is wandering a long way from Calais;—not at all. We are only searching for our quotation, in order to break up its siege and disperse the besiegers. Let us try at a hazard —

“What great events from little causes spring!”

There is not much in it, after all; but, as Pope wrote it, nobody doubts it—and that is quite enough for the millions. Well, the little cause that produced the great events which we are about to record was, that Mr. Dubois took one evening, very unluckily too late, a walk in the Palais Royal, and there caught an alarming cold. Mr. Dubois had been honoured for nine-and-twenty years with the confidence of all the tragic heroes that ever stilted themselves along the highways of humanity. He was all but born an Agamemnon, nurtured a Hippolytus, and fairly educated with Mahomet. From his infancy had been confided to him the thrice honourable charge of astonishing the pit with those beautiful and interminable actions which make French tragedy so probable and so very very natural;—and yet, at times, he would condescend to fill the part of a simple footman, but, of course, with the air of a demi-god. He was a man of versatility, and, though devoted to Melpomene, would now and then condescend to flirt with Thalia—and with equal success.

In the memorable “*SIEGE OF CALAIS*,” Mister Dubois enacted the personage of that generous Mauny, so lachrymose on the fate of the six self-devoted sacrifices. Mr. Dubois could weep like a leaky cask. But the private life of our Protean friend was, we are sorry to record, not regulated by those severe principles which so much distinguished the English general whom he so movingly personified. But let us confess that our friend is not the only great character whose public and private life show a little discrepancy. The great actors on the world’s stage, as well as at the Theatre Royal, have too often stumbled at this point. The noble Dubois, so pathetic, so compassionate, so patriotic, moral, and inflexibly virtuous *on* the boards, proved himself, when *off*, a keen hand, and the least in the world a knave—nothing certainly to make a fuss about.

The clever Dubois fell ill. Illness is the common lot, and the lot, more especially, of those who will promenade, in the evenings, in the Palais Royal. The representatives of kings, when ill, must, no less

than the kings themselves, get cured ; and so, with as little of royal pomp as could be imagined, he applied himself to a dapper barber-surgeon. The cares and the skill of the tonsorial Galen were responsive to the wishes and the anxieties of the Parisian world ; yet the ungrateful Dubois responded not to the wishes and anxieties of the little surgeon ; for the actor's memory, being overburthened with parts to please the public, was totally oblivious to his private affairs. The bills of the play played the deuce with his other bills ;—he first forgot to pay the doctor's, and he finished by suddenly remembering that he had paid it long ago.

The surgeon, with a much better memory—we will not mention principles—could not succeed in persuading our gentleman that he had cured him, so he cited him before the judge. The magnificent Dubois, too much occupied with some of the roguish parts he had played on the stage, forgot himself, and endeavoured to enact one of them on the floor of the court, and, with a good deal of dramatic effect, offered to take his oath that he had already once paid the demand. A scamp of the name of Blainville, his boon companion, and a detestable actor both on and off the stage, very willingly swore to the payment of that bill which he piously wished his friend had really paid.

But the little lancet-wielder's lawyer, seeing that he had two oath-swallowers of enormous gullets to deal with, determined to play with them at a game in which they were certain to be checkmated. He drew up a process, and had it printed, in favour of his client, in which he stated, that neither the oath of the veritable Mr. Dubois, nor that of the more than veritable Mr. Blainville, could be received in any court of justice, seeing that they were excommunicate, and in the full exercise of an infamous profession—all the which was legally and theologically true. In this respect, how far superior are our own actors and actresses ! The law recognizes them *only* as vagabonds ;—truly they have much to be thankful for !

This, of course, in so excitable a community as that of Paris, raised a tolerable commotion. Of course, the whole tribe of comedians took up the cause of their undeserving brethren—not upon their merits, for that would have been building on something extremely subtle and visionary—but on the merits of the question generally. Never had a better opportunity offered itself for doing away with those execrable prejudices and most unjust laws as respected their class—prejudices and laws as shameful to an enlightened nation, as they were humiliating to what *might* be a very deserving portion of the social community.

But facts are dreadfully impregnable. On a proper investigation by the players, it was soon discovered that the Messieurs Dubois and Blainville were exactly nothing better than a pair of incontestable blackguards. It was, therefore, necessary, for the good of the theatrical cause, to disconnect themselves from these two littlegoods. Their company paid the surgeon's bill and law-costs, and, after having consulted with and obtained the approbation of the principal officers of his majesty's household, they thought themselves quite safe in striking out the names of our two hard swearers from the list of the royal

comedians in ordinary—an appellation answering to that of his majesty's servants with ourselves.

After this, it was thought that the "Siege of Calais" would have gone on admirably, and proved equally beneficial to the conquerors and the conquered. No such thing. The Destinies—O those Destinies!—again interfered. The part of Mauny the illustrious was given to Mr. Bellecour, in the room of the illustrious Dubois. The announcement was spread all over Paris, the playbills confirmed it—but those Destinies again—they had postponed this longed-for representation, and inscribed the sentence on their book of brass, until exactly the day after the commencement of eternity.

The wretchedness of the renowned Dubois had touched the pious heart of his daughter, an actor of the *Comédie Française*, and, after Miss Clairon, the very frail but only hope of the public. The amiable young lady, animated by that august piety which is sure to precipitate its possessor into the lap of heroism, undertook to save her father, let it cost her what it would ; and it is certain that this her filial tenderness obliged her to put no bounds to other tendernesses, if not so filial, almost as pleasant. Armed with the natural powers of her charms, made still more irresistible by her cause and her misfortune, she set out, in a state of enviable resignation, to meet her fate. It would have been a noble, had it been a first sacrifice—*mais passons tout cela*. She was one of those sensible young ladies who know how to make a sacrifice a pleasure.

The two principal officers of his majesty's household could not see so much despair unconcerned. They respected the daughter's grief, and participated in her feelings. In an instant the aspect of affairs is changed. The two first gentlemen immediately ordered the magniloquent Dubois to be reinstated on the list of his majesty's servants, and that very morn they sent an order to the playhouse that the "SIEGE OF CALAIS" should be represented that very evening, and the identical Dubois should resume, at the same time, his character of the sentimental Mauny.

At this unexpected turn the petrified actors played their parts for once very naturally, stared wildly at each other, and then proceeded to discuss the difficulties into which the filial piety of Ma'amselle Dubois had involved them. They were in the first instance magnanimous enough. Not one, no not even a shifter of the scenes, would adulterate their immaculate characters by playing with a scoundrel whom they had ignominiously expelled from the company by an unanimous decision. Their characters ! It sounded exceedingly well. The super-exalted Ma'amselle Clairon, for whom it was a glory to run mad, and worth an immortality to ruin oneself, suddenly found herself taken violently ill, and very heroically went to bed. The Kean of the day vanished, Molé evaporated. No more of King Edward—no more of Harcourt—Eustache Brisarde, the courageous Eustache, made a solemn declaration, swearing by this and by that, that nothing should ever compel him to be found within the walls of Calais alongside of a rogue. The siege was again and effectually raised.

Vivent Messieurs et Mesdames les Comédiens !

However, the hour of representation approaches. The public

have assembled. The partisans of the beautiful Dubois are pleading her cause in the pit and the corridors. She herself, with her luxuriant hair all dishevelled, the picture of distressed eloquence, suppliant, moves from box to box, endeavouring to move all hearts in the favour of an unfortunate father, the victim of the excessive and squeamish delicacy of his associates. The curtain draws up. The timid and gooselike Bouvet, with his white gloves in his hand, and his whiter complexion struggling with his extravagant rouge, creeps tremblingly forward, and stammers out this address—"Ladies and gentlemen, we are in despair at not being able to give you the *"SIEGE——"*

"No despair!" bellows the pit. "The *SIEGE OF CALAIS and Dubois!*"

This terrible shout resounds throughout the house, extending itself to the orchestra, shaking the powder out of the fiddlers' wigs, penetrates through the boxes, echoes along the avenues, and fairly reaches the portico, where it is taken up by one-half of the blackguards of the city, and immediately spread through Paris by the other.

The guard makes believe, as the little children say, to quiet the house, but are obliged to confine their efforts to example, and to keep themselves very quiet indeed, in a wholesome fear of greater misfortunes. Preville, the incomparable Preville, made his smiling appearance in order to commence the comedy of the "*Gamester*," that had been substituted for the tragedy of this famous "*SIEGE OF CALAIS*" He is beaten back by a hurricane of hisses, and obliged to scud for it before the wind, and disappear.

"The insolent mountebanks! To prison with them! Insolent apes! To the hospital with Clairon! To prison with these sticks! Begone, rascals, vagabonds!"

This frenzy lasted just seven hours, and produced some hundreds of sore throats. The enlightened public would hear nothing but their own "most sweet voices," and at last could hardly hear these. The curtain falls, the money is returned at the doors, the flame spreads, and in an instant all Paris condemns the actors without mercy, and without at all understanding the merits of the question. The O. P. row in this our beloved and most sensible country was not managed better.

Charming public! all amiable art thou in thy judgments! What happiness to serve thee! Thou, who so well knowest how to forget, in a moment, all past services, and who delightest suddenly to outrage and insult all that thou hast been blindly and enthusiastically applauding uninterruptedly for twenty years! Thou wilt be a great gainer, doubtlessly, to degrade and vilify those talents which have contributed to thine amusement and thy glory. With this noble gratitude there will be never wanting to you great talents, great writers, and great geniuses. Charming public! all amiable art thou in thy judgments!

This apostrophe is meant for the present and the future public, as I fear that that of 1765 is a little too late to benefit by it. If they, the present public, feel the force of this appeal, let it commence its reformation by requiring another edition of all our works. There is a great deal of room for their generosity.

We must now record the effects of this commotion. The worthy and

honest Eustache Brisarde, and the exalted Count de Mahun, who condescended to be vulgarly known as Mr. Dauberval, and who had likewise refused to play with the illustrious Dubois, were arrested and thrown into durance vile in the prison of Fort l'Evêque.

The theatre remained closed all the next day, and the famous Miss Clairon, although confined to her bed by real or supposititious indisposition, was taken thence and also imprisoned in this same Fort l'Evêque. The government was strong, the public was strong, and the players weak. Can we then be surprised at these strong measures?

Thus the principal characters of the "SIEGE OF CALAIS," being themselves obliged to sustain a blockade within stone walls, on the 17th, the day after the carrying away captive, at two in the afternoon the Comédie of the "*Chevalier à la Mode*" was posted on the doors of the theatre. The greatest precautions had been taken to preserve peace in the house. All parts of the building were filled with detachments of the police, sentinels, and patrols of soldiers. The lieutenant-general of the *gens d'armes* was there in person. Indeed, as the officials made the principal part of the audience, to have produced a disturbance they must themselves have made it.

When the curtain drew up to this very complaisant house, the affrighted Bellecour, with panic on his features and humility in his looks, in the name of the company humbly craved pardon of the public for having failed in respect towards it. This apology was drawn up by orders from the highest quarter, and which the public had the generosity most vehemently to applaud. For the benefit of our present and future managers, we shall give this apology as nearly verbatim as the genius of the two languages will admit of. It is an admirable specimen of the climax of baseness.

"Most indulgent ladies and gentlemen,

"Penetrated by the intensest grief, and humbled by the deepest contrition, we once more presume to present ourselves before you. We deplore with the greatest bitterness our misfortune in having offended you. Our souls cannot be more affected than they are at the real and inexcusable wrong which we have done you. There is no conceivable apology which we do not owe you. We wait with the humblest submission for the punishment which you may be pleased to award us, and the punishment that has already been imposed on our companions we confess is much less than they or we deserve. Our repentance is sincere, and that which increases our sorrows is the being obliged to lock up, in the recesses of our hearts, the sentiments of zeal, of attachment, and of profound respect which we entertain for you, and the sincerity of which you have a right to suspect at the present moment. Time only can prove the reality of all that we profess. By our labours and by our efforts, which henceforth we will make to contribute to your amusement, we hope to efface from your memory all traces of our deep offence; and it is from the kindness and indulgence with which you have so long honoured us, that we wait for the pardon for which we dare not supplicate you to grant us."

During the triumph of that monster with more heads than brains,

the august public, the plays were miserably performed, owing to the incarceration of all the best actors and actresses. It is very true, that a triumph always costs something. Among these victims to the support of honour, honesty, and decency, was, as we have before stated, the incomparable Mademoiselle Clairon, the French Siddons of their stage, not certainly her equal there, and, we are very sorry to observe, very, very far her inferior in private virtue. But she was a high-spirited and a glorious woman notwithstanding, and, in her professional character, *la belle France* has just cause to be proud of *la belle Clairon*.

Whilst this distinguished lady languished within the walls of Fort l'Evêque, we will take the opportunity of saying a few words concerning her, which may not be unacceptable to the English reader. She was certainly great only on the stage. Her admirers had flattered her into littleness—they had made her insolent, jealous of all rivalry, and intolerably overbearing. Even our own dear, never-to-be-gotten Garrick had a good deal assisted to spoil her. In common with every man of taste, he paid her her just tribute as a tragic actress; and, it was rumoured, was not a little captivated with her personal charms. The latter, Garrick denied to Diderot, and maintained that he had only been respectfully gallant to the advances of this seductive lady. Let this avowal stand for as much as it is worth, and it was not worth a great deal, as Mrs. Garrick certainly was jealous of the gifted comedian, for whom he designed the face of a model which represented Mademoiselle Clairon in the act of being crowned by Melpomene, and on the opposite side was this inscription—

“J’ai prédit que Clairon illustrait le scène,
Et mon espoir n’a point été déçu ;
Elle a couronnée Melpomène,
Melpomène lui rend ce qu’elle en a reçu.”

The which, for the edification of those who have learned French at suburban schools, may thus be translated :

“I Clairon foresaw the stage would tread,
Its glory ; and my hopes have not proved vain ;
She placed a crown upon Melpomene’s head,
Which the just goddess gave to her again.”

The judicious reader will perceive that the design for the medallion, the quatrain, and the translation, are all common-place and contemptible ; but we thank that particular Muse whom we are in the habit of invoking, that only one-third of this bêtise can be fairly attributed to us, and it is something to row in the same boat with Garrick, although in this case it happens to be rather a shabby one.

The quiet hauteur with which she received the homage of her adorers, her overbearing assumptions of superiority, and her greediness of public applause, were continually fed by offerings as foolish as that which we have just narrated. The Count Vabelle, her titular friend and her devoted admirer, in a medallion which he had struck off in her honour, outdid Garrick in platitudes. On one side was the bust of the heroine, and on the other this little bit of prosy prose—“*Melpomene and Friendship have engraved this medallion.*”

We will give a single anecdote of this all but worshipped lady's tyrannical spirit. She was on pouting terms with M. de Saint Foix, the author of some tranquillizing farces, and other sedative little affairs. Now Saint Foix had produced a piece of which he was extremely vain, as well he might be, for it could boast the prettiest title imaginable—that of “The Graces.” So he became proud of heart of the composition, and much wished to administer a dose of it to the king. Now his most christian majesty was not quite so fond of the play as was Monsieur Saint Foix of “The Graces.” But the latter having obtained an audience, he assured his majesty that the whole infliction would not endure above two hours ; so, on this, his majesty consented to be victimised for that exact time, and no longer.

The author, with his heart swollen with gratified ambition, hastened to the green-room, and prayed Ma'amselle Doligny, the second donna, to hasten over her part, and to retire during the fifth act of the first piece, in order to dress immediately for “The Graces.” This first piece was the tragedy of Olympia, of which the superb Clairon was the heroine, and Doligny her companion. Olympia Clairon got information of this very pretty arrangement, and, irritated that they had dared to make it without her consent, told *Monsieur l'auteur* of “The Graces” that he was a very bold man, and had no grace in him, to presume to fix the time that her tragedy should occupy ; and that it should last just so long as she took pleasure in declaiming it, and that she was now determined to spin it out a well measured half hour more than usual—and, moreover, if Miss Doligny should offer to leave the stage before the fall of the curtain, she most certainly would herself walk off too, and his majesty should know who was to blame.

Never did her ladyship play with more gravity. Her motions were slow and dignified—her pauses emphatic and long, very long indeed. In the interval of the acts she felt unusually faint and languid, and required an age of time to reinvigorate herself. Ma'amselle Doligny dared not disobey her princess. She had no opportunity of making her escape to dress for “The Graces” until the curtain fell—which it did at last ; the pieces having endured a mortal three hours, during the last of which the agony of the author was intense. However, he had the consolation to see that his majesty was fast asleep in his box.

With the least possible interval the curtain again rose in honour of “The Graces,” and, according to order, his majesty was punctually awoke. The sovereign, looking at his watch, fell into a right royal rage, and finding that he had been relieved from the cares of his kingdom for three hours, he left the theatre hastily, calling the mortified author something but little better than a wearisome blackguard, and threatening to send him into the classical retirement of Fort l'Evêque. Saint Foix narrowly escaped a long poetical solitude.

Actors and authors are equally spiteful. The furious scribbler had recourse to an epigram. To understand it fully, the reader must be made aware that Ma'amselle Clairon's first name was Fretillon, and under which the disorders of her youth had been enacted.

“ Pour la fameuse Fretillon
 On a frappé, dit-on un médaillon ;
 Mais, à quel prix qu'on le donne,
 Fût ce pour douze sous, fût ce même pour un,
 Il ne sera jamais aussi commun
 Que le fut jadis sa personne.”

This is very bitter ; and the more bitter and the more biting, because of its truth. Instead of translating it, we will state the poetical punishment that was inflicted on its author. He wished to enjoy the luxury of an incognito, and thus gather his own laurels unknown. Let no man be sure of praise, however firmly he may believe that he deserves it. He had it read by one of his friends, who was in the secret, at a very large party of literary ladies and gentlemen, as a little effusion which had just got into circulation. It was diligently taken to pieces, unanimously condemned, and pronounced to be detestable. Saint Foix was forced to agree with the general sentiment, and join in the outcry against his own verses. Could there be a greater punishment to a very vain man ?

But we must return to our prisoners confined in Fort l'Evêque, the most conspicuous of whom was, of course, Ma'amselle Clairon, now suffering in a good cause. They all created for themselves a wonderful sympathy, and received many more visits than did our martyred sheriffs when they were incarcerated by the House of Commons, and suffered so nobly upon the best wines and viands which the country could produce. The whole extent of the quay of Fort l'Evêque was, from “morn till noon, from noon till dewy eve,” covered with carriages.

At length, the prima donna fell really and alarmingly ill, and the two principal gentlemen of his most christian majesty's household, became so very christian and considerate themselves as to permit this lady to return home, remaining always under the surveillance of the police, strictly forbidden to see any of her brothers and sisters of the sock and buskin, and permitted only to receive, during the livelong day, just a half dozen persons. So the gentlemen drew lots, played at primero and ombre, and fought a few duels, in order to gain the distinction of being one of the privileged six.

But how was this ridiculous struggle to end ? A struggle in which all suffered, and the court became ridiculous. At this time it must be remembered that France was governed by a despotism, but, like all despotisms that ever existed, rotten at the core, and dependent for existence upon public opinion. Always strong to do private and individual wrongs, but too weak ever to do that which is right, when the right, which is too often the case, is opposed to the popular prejudice of the times—of the three parties, the court, the public, and the players, the players only acted well and honourably—and yet on them fell most of the damage.

The first result of this was, that the author of this memorable “*Siege of Calais*,” Monsieur du Belloi, in order not to be also the author of more sufferings, or even the abettor of these unjust persecutions inflicted upon the players, withdrew his tragedy altogether from

the stage ; but it had not the effect of procuring the release of the contumacious, who refused to confabulate, before the scenes or elsewhere, with the now too famous and always too infamous *Sieur Dubois*. Thus, the discriminating French public lost the pleasure, to which they were so much attached, of witnessing the representation of bombast so flattering to the national vanity.

The interdict continued still in force against *Ma'amselle Clairon*, whilst the other royal servants languished in prison, and these were the best actors of whom France could boast. Then there appeared a book, which had a great run, panegyrising *Ma'amselle* a great deal above any mortal who ever existed, full of the most sensible and tedious reflections on the injustice of the histrionic professors being compelled to live under the bar of excommunication, when dying not to be allowed to be well oiled, and when dead to be shovelled like dogs and cats into unconsecrated holes.

Then followed, in this work, a summary of all the verses, pictures, busts, and engravings, that had appeared in honour of this lady. This pamphlet was the production of an Englishman, *Sir Marcus Macdonald*, and had the effect of procuring for him an order from the court to leave the kingdom, and the contempt and unpopularity of the public, who now detested the idol whom they had so many years worshipped, because, perhaps for the first time in her life, she dared to be in the right.

Although the two *premiers gentilshommes du roi*, to whom the ladies and gentlemen of the stage lights were indebted for this persecution, went hand in hand with the public, they found themselves in a very contemptible position. The actors had virtually conquered. Among the imprisoned were the celebrated *Le Kain*, an ancestor, we believe, of the *Keans* of the present century, *Brisard*, *Préville*, *Molé*, and *Dauberval* ; and as they continued firm, it became necessary to choose between the utter ruin of the French drama, or that of *Mister Dubois*. Already had the theatre suffered in its finances the loss of 100,000 livres.

Monsieur le Maréchal de Richelieu, le premier des deux premiers gentils hommes du roi, found himself in an awkward predicament ; for, carried away by his virtuous affection for the charming *Dubois* fille, he had determined not to yield ; but ultimately the conqueror of *Minorca* was forced disgracefully to raise the siege of *Fort l'Evêque*, nor could he prevent those who had there been confined from coming out with all the honours of war, after they had effectually raised the "SIEGE OF CALAIS," in spite of the succours of a marshal so renowned.

As may well be supposed, the public became, in the end, ashamed of the part which they had taken in the disgraceful business, and at length came to the conviction that *Dubois* had been justly expelled from the company. Two large volumes would not comprise all the stories, anecdotes and squibs, to which this transaction gave birth,

In order to display the bitterness and contempt which was entertained against these poor players at the commencement of this fracas, a very ungallant colonel of infantry exclaimed from the pit, "I only wish that I had my regiment here." The saloons and the corridors

resounded with imprecations and abuse, during the first days of the squabble, against the comedians. Rogues, beggars, vagabonds, infamous animals, were the favourite terms with which they were honoured under their own roof. A man of a little common sense stopped one of these illustrious bawlers in the midst of one of these noble orations, and pointing out to him, over the fire-place, the bust of Molière, he coolly said to him, "There is one of these vagabonds, whom the world will envy France for having possessed, more than all the first lords of the bedchamber that ever she could boast of."

Another symptom indicated the bad taste of the times, and the low ebb of talent that then prevailed in Paris. Not a good song, a tolerable copy of verses, or a readable epigram, did a subject so fertile for the display of wit produce.

We must not just yet lose sight of the prima donna, Clairon; a person, theatrically considered, certainly almost as honourable to our neighbours as is the transcendent Siddons to ourselves; and making due allowance for the national taste of the times then prevalent on the other side of the water, nearly the equal of our immortal actress. From the noble fortitude which she had displayed, that happened which every sensible and right-minded person predicted; on coming out of prison, she indignantly demanded her dismissal from the "royal property," for such she and her comrades were actually considered.

This request the great lord of the bedchamber with the marshal's baton frankly said that he never would grant, but he was considerate enough to allow the lady one year of absence, in order to recover her health. This was looked upon, in Paris, as a great act of condescension on the part of the marshal, and praises for his courtesy resounded from all, with the exception of the actors.

How much better would it have been to have avoided this ridiculous contention, which too well characterized the tone of the manners of the age, and which gave rise to numerous other little acts, not conferring too much honour upon a people who prided themselves upon being in the van of civilization! It was humiliating to the public, and to the authority which abetted them, to have exercised so much tyrannical harshness upon a class for having displayed an honourable feeling, with no other result than that of preserving, for a time, the miserable actor, and worse private individual, Dubois, on the stage, and losing the valuable talents of Mademoiselle Clairon and those of the best actors in France. This was not the way to cherish merit, nor will prisons ever become the best schools for acting. To be sure, there were the little theatres and puppet-shows to which to repair, and tumbling, grimacing, and rope-dancing still existed to console the Parisians for the loss of a set of people, who, after all, only knew how properly to recite the verses of Corneille, Racine, of Molière and Voltaire.

As the Clairon has imperceptibly become our heroine, we cannot yet part with her; for, although she had not sufficient genius to found a school of acting, or to be imitated beyond her own circle, she was much too clever to be wholly forgotten, even by Englishmen.

About a year after her retirement, in March, the fashionable world of that day began to wear brighter looks, as the rumour became very general, that, to conciliate her, and to induce her once more to resume

her place on the boards, vast projects were being concerted that would dignify the then degraded state of the royal comedians. In the first place, they were to be relieved from the excommunication of the priests, their oaths to be available in courts of justice, and their bodies to be held worthy to rot in consecrated ground, and they to be fully endued with all the civil rights of a French subject. It was also contemplated, by letters patent, to make of the national theatre a dramatic Royal Academy, and the actors thenceforward to be called Dramatic Royal Academicians, and to have a suitable rank. This idea was not bad. Besides all this, as, in virtue of the institution of the *Comédie Française*, the players had always made a part of *la Chambre du Roi*, an actor was to rank with and have the title of valet-de-chambre of the king, and an actress that of *femme-de-chambre* of the queen ; vain distinctions, but very palatable to these sort of people.

Under all these conditions, Ma'amselle Clairon condescended to accept of the olive branch, to forget the severities of M. le Maréchal de Richelieu, the horrors of Fort l'Evêque, and again to return to her duty. But all these fine promises bore no fruit of performance. It was thought that there was a religious merit in breaking faith with the excommunicated, and the most unchristian confessor of his most christian majesty proved too strong for the rights of common honesty and the wishes of the public. None of the stipulated conditions upon which Clairon resumed her avocations were fulfilled. When the just demands of the players were argued before the king in council, it was observed by the Pharisees that they, the players, were just as well off now as in the reign of Louis XIII., and that there was now not the least occasion to better their condition. So the king very piously decided against all innovation, and thus the betrayed actors were very charitably left in their forlorn state of perdition. On this, our heroine again demanded her dismissal, which was immediately granted, the only part that a woman of the least pretensions to a soul above that of an abject slave could take.

Let the considerate reader reflect for a moment on this state of things. On the score of religion, the priests would not take off from the actors the ban of excommunication, nor permit them the rites of christian burial, nor would the court suffer them, without the greatest difficulty, to withdraw from this their sinful avocation. They were thus consigned, according to the prevalent faith, to everlasting torments, to please the clergy, whilst they could not emancipate themselves from this dreadful penalty, in order that they might still administer, not to the pleasure, (for he took but little interest in the drama,) but to the pomp and pageantry of the king.

Superstition and tyranny are inseparable.

Mademoiselle remained in abeyance, and was fast sinking into oblivion, until the latter end of 1768. Two years and a half, with a people so volatile as the French, is a dreadful space of time during which to keep alive the remembrance of a ci-devant favourite. In the September of the above year, the young king of Denmark came to the capital to see in what manner the Parisians ate, drank, and played the fool. He was fêted, of course. In fact, they gave the poor young man neither respite nor rest, and ended by nearly killing him with a

succession of pleasures—he escaped this blissful sort of death at the expense of a dangerous illness.

However, among other amusements, it was reserved for Madame la duchesse de Villeroy to astonish him by the dramatic powers of our heroine, at her little private theatre. This elegant building was so small that it would scarcely contain one hundred spectators, but as all these were the *élite* of the monarchy, Clairon had an audience worthy of her talents. She supported the characters of Dido, and of Roxana in the tragedy of Bajazet. After the performance she was presented by the duchess to his Danish majesty, who, taking from his own finger a ring, placed it on that of the actress.

Notwithstanding this royal courtesy, the actress was not so satisfied with the monarch as was the monarch with the actress. In the character of Dido she did not find him sufficiently tender, in her character of Roxana sufficiently humble, and as Ma'amselle Clairon by no means sufficiently penetrated with admiration. Altogether the young king had the consummation of unhappiness to displease the somewhat stilted heroine of the French stage.

We will conclude by a criticism on her style of acting, which we have gathered from various sources, and from her contemporaries. She appears to have been a great formalist. She carried the polish of mere art to that degree of excess, that she threatened to ruin a second time the true style of declamation which had been formerly established in France by Baron and Ma'amselle Lecouvrer. The affectation and monotony of her speaking and acting were only discernible to real connoisseurs. The strength of her lungs, a clear and sonorous articulation, and the sudden vehemence of her manner when the least expected, and in the most quiet scenes, did not fail to dazzle the gaping fools of the pit, who had always their large hands ready to applaud anything which took them by surprise, and, with them, that which is the farthest from nature is always the most wonderful and the finest.

This taking an audience by storm is totally incompatible with the true sublime, and ends by ultimately destroying in the actor that delicacy of perception necessary to discover the nicer shades and tints of character, which, however, are generally things lost to the audience. This is the worst feature in Clairon's character. On the other side, it may well be said that she had fathomed the profundity of her art, and had so well studied that nature which she did not possess, that she insensibly led the public taste from that simplicity and purity of acting which will always be the greatest charm to the cultivated mind, and which ought to be replaced by nothing, however dazzling and imposing.

Clairon well knew how to imitate the utmost simplicity, and nature the most unsophisticated, but the effect of study would, in spite of all her efforts, continually appear. Her consummate art would break out so repeatedly, that our admiration of it always smothered every other emotion. Her example, however, became contagious. Her success created imitators, and the French tragedy insensibly modelled itself upon her views, and became pompous, monotonous, and cold. Is not this the character of tragic acting in France even at the present day?

RECOLLECTIONS OF A STUDENT.¹

THE POLISH HARP-GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOOD-SPIRIT."

Wer Waffen trägt und krieget
 Wer an den Ketten liegt
 Wer auf dem Meere wallt
 Wer voll ist schwerer Sorgen
 Der spricht: wann wird es Morgen?
 Aurora! Komm doch bald!

OPITZ.

No sooner had the tidings arrived of the abduction and captivity of the palatine, than the Harbinger of Death hastened to the castle of his victim, whose magnificent estates had been granted to him in consideration—thus ran the words of the ukase—of his eminent and valuable services. The serfs and tenantry were all to be transported to the Asiatic frontier of the empire; but the instant they heard this decree, by a simultaneous impulse many fled across the country, forming the germ of those bands, afterwards so famous in the forest of Bialowies; others, wrought to despair, preferring to die in their native land, rather than be borne away, or hunted down like wild beasts, flew to arms, stirred by the thrilling summons of the lovely but maniac mother, who, released from her prison, haunted the house like a spirit.

The bailiff sent by Orloff to take possession of his new domain, and expel the ancient inhabitants, was by them killed on the spot, and the Harbinger himself soon came with a band and colony of soldiers. The tenantry had retired within the castle, that loomed down in mingled magnificence and gloom on the advancing foe. The approach of the latter had been expected for some time, and emissaries sent abroad to stir the surrounding country, in the vain hope that it would rise and aid. But the leaders of the secret conspiracy were too vigilant to sanction or permit so ruinous an attempt at that time, and all remained tranquil.

* * * * *

A dark bar heaved up from the skyward heath, a strange clangour floated from the distant hollows, and the beleaguered saw the living lines of the coming death advancing speedily upon them.

The summons of Orloff was replied to with contempt. Acquainted with the fearful injuries their loved master had sustained at the hands of him, now come to lord it over his estates, fired by the sight of their kind and lovely mistress, who breathed such words of fire, such dire and thrilling adjurations, as might have summoned the dead from their ancestral graves, the fearful spirit that animated her came over them, and, like a band of avenging furies, they gathered on the stately battlements. The huge banner of ancient Poland floated on the

¹ Continued from No. cxxiv. p. 427.

highest tower, broad, shadowy, gigantic, like a godhead on a throne, and as it moved on the air, the proud eagle seemed to flap his kingly wings.

A smile of vexation passed across the face of Orloff as he surveyed the preparations for defence.

"Fire not on that castle!" he exclaimed, "injure it at your peril!" dreading lest it should be destroyed; while his greedy eye feasted on the gorgeous pile soon to be his own, and he revelled by anticipation on the broad and fertile lands from which he would wring fresh food for his wasteful riots and gold-bought impunity of crime.

It was night around the castle of S——. The calm moonbeams bathed its huge battlements with a holy light, such as lingers in the aisles of dim cathedrals, bringing out and softening by turns their bold proportions.

Nothing stirred across the plains save the moon-chased shadows flitting away stealthily, like evil thoughts before prayer!

Orloff had postponed taking possession of the castle till to-morrow, owing to the resistance he anticipated, and fearful lest the beautiful architecture of the exterior, or costly internal decorations, might be injured in a nocturnal assault.

All was silent, and the Harbinger had stepped forth from his tent to contemplate the exquisite scene before him—the moonlit castle, the hushed plains, the whispering woods, that seemed conversing with their leaves, the remote hills, from which ever and anon broke a mysterious and unearthly sound, as though they had overheard words from heaven, and repeated them to each other in awe, while far distant wound the Vistula, glowing white, pure, and shadowless, like a path for the spirits of men to their eternal mansions.

While thus he watched, the music of a soft voice floated downward from the castle, so sadly sweet, and withal so wild, that even the ruthless Harbinger listened in admiration. Little did he dream of what was borne onward by the tide of that melody—of what was summoned by those words.

THE MANIAC LADY'S SONG.

"The lady sits on the moonlit tower,
Night's woof is woven far,
The castle lies beneath her
Like a cloud beneath a star.
The lady's shadowy bright,
And that is dark as night—
'Tis a cloud beneath a star!

The owls forget to hoot
O'er the moonbeam-paven heath,
And the winds are hot and still,
For the dew hath been their death.
It stole upon their wings,
And slew the tempest-kings—
The dew hath been their death.

The spoiler's 'neath the castle,
His band is gathering deep ;—
O no ! 'tis but the moor-blight
Glides o'er the forest's sleep.
Its night-mare spell it weaves,
And fever shakes their leaves,
For the forests dream in sleep.

The poisonous damp would blot
That lonely star away,
When in the cloud beneath her
She sends her kindling ray.
Deep in its lordly shade
Unkindled lightning laid—
It wakes beneath her ray !

Then from its robe of darkness
Forth bursts the glorious flame,
Joying like a captive child
That has broken from its chain.
Its arms wave o'er the heath,
And grasp at all beneath—
It burns its shattered chain.

On ! my fierce lightnings on !
The sable game's in view ;
I start ye from your leashes—
My hounds of fire, pursue !
Stream forth a joyous pack,
On the tempest's scattered rack—
My hounds of fire, pursue !"

The soft melodious voice died away on the tower, but was still heard at intervals from the interior of the building, faint and low, like a bird warbling in sleep.

Suddenly a deep groan smote the ear of the Harbinger—a cry for aid, again and again, simultaneous from opposite sides of the camp. He started, for all else was silent as death, and fearfully that sudden sound broke on the hush, stunning from contrast ! A wild and shadowy form flitted past him, gaunt, ghastly, and horrible ; another and another swept by, a few yards distant—a spectral line ! He raised his voice—but it was needless ; a deep gathering, like the surging up of waves after a calm, announced that the camp was aroused, while ever and anon came hollow groan or muttered imprecation, and through the tents of the sleepers rushed those strange and terrible visitors ;—the muster-word of the assembling soldiery, as they were formed by their officers, announced a rapidly-approaching change in the scene.

Soon a loud thunder shook the camp, and a wave of light swept over the ground, as the Russian musqueteers scattered a shower of deadly fire from their close-formed line—a loud cheer burst from them as, through the moon-pierced smoke, they saw the falling bodies of the advancing Poles. Volley succeeded volley, like echo of the preceding, cheer rang on cheer, as the Russians observed the effect of their fire, while deep silence reigned amid their opponents. No shout answered, not a shot was fired, but fierce and voiceless the serfs swept

on against the enemy. In that dread midnight they had done their work well in the slumbering camp; and when it was aroused, the soldier, starting at the 'larum to awaken his comrade, found a corse by his side, and an avenger striding over him, who, before he could rise and struggle, plunged a scythe in his breast.

The besieged, seeing that resistance within the walls of the castle was vain, had determined on surprising the camp by a night assault, and, at a time when the sky was partially obscured, had stolen on unobserved, shrouded by the furze and brake, killed the drowsy and unsuspecting sentinels at their posts, invaded the tents, and thus great numbers of the Russians had fallen before they were fully aware of the extent of their danger. In a serried body the troops now grappled with their desperate assailants. Though not possessed of fire-arms, the latter soon rendered those of the soldiery unavailing, as they joined in close combat, and struggled hand to hand.

Terror overwhelmed the Harbinger, as the mingled tide of friend and foe swept around him; but he escaped unharmed, as though a charm guarded his life, and at length, as the din grew weaker and subsided, a smile returned to his fiendish countenance.

"Fools!" he exclaimed, "they have done my work! There can be no more resistance now from the castle! The building is safe! Heavens! what a noble pile!"

Dark grandeur wrapped the gigantic edifice, but, as he spoke, a figure was discernible within, passing rapidly with a torch athwart the galleries and chambers, and a light shot up within the highest tower. From window to window might be traced its internal ascent from the base, a flaming spectre mounting the lofty stair. At first it was wayward and wavering, alternate gleams and shadows, as though the gods of light and darkness were struggling for mastery, but anon it leaped upward with a joyous bound, like a fierce monster freed from fetters, lashing the inner walls that stood revealed to those without.

At the same time that ominous torch was traced flitting about the wings of the castle, a red star amid darkness—but soon where it had been, surged the keen and angry conflagration.

Paralyzed by astonishment and awe stood the Russian troops, gazing on the magnificent spectacle, as, with crash succeeding crash, the weaker parts of the building fell in, forming a crimson furnace below, from which rose the now solitary and massive towers, louring over the bright ruin. The entire castle was now a prey to the flames, when, up that tower where they had first appeared, rushed a human form, in dark outline against the waving light. Its ascent might be traced till it reached the topmost height, and stood upon the battlement, that rocked as the waves of that burning sea beat against their base.

It was the maniac lady. The flames rushed after her as though in pursuit, pouring out through the windows and shattered roof till they played round her like a robe, pure, bright, and beautiful, as though angels had arrayed her in the garments of heaven, that her soul might appear in festal guise before the eternal gate.

Her form seemed dilated far beyond the human size by the kindled atmosphere, and her shadow fell over the plain, wrapping the host be-

neath in ominous gloom. Wildly she waved her arms towards heaven, and as she waved, dark shadows sailed across the land, as though she showered visible curses from her burning throne.

The madness seemed to have left her in that terrific hour. Though before she had stormed and raved, she grew calm as her doom approached; and when the serfs rushed forth from the castle, she mounted the ramparts, and over the tide of the battle beneath poured the soft stream of her musical song, as if in pity, that the listening angels might not hear the blasphemies of murder through the melody of her chant.

Then, when death had silenced the horrid din below, and the last of her poor defenders had fallen, she kindled that mighty conflagration, that the Russian boor might not revel in the home of the Polish prince, nor the lawless ruffian desecrate the dwelling of Poland's sweetest daughters.

Now she stood above her work, that surged and raged around her and below, and her voice came borne on the tide of flame, the avenger's pæan over the avenged, as she denounced the wrath of her father-land on the oppressor.

Still she seemed unharmed, (and, in truth, she felt no pain, for her thoughts and her heart were with those who had preceded her,) while the glowing and sparkling mass of the tower rose beneath, like a palace of chrysolite and ruby reared by celestial hands, and as its hollow and glittering crust fell in, the burning pinions of the conflagration wafted her soul to heaven.

A breathless silence swayed the awed spectators. Well had that gallant defence been achieved, nobly those sacred memorials of old wrested from the ruthless spoiler.

That defence might have taught the invader what he had to expect from the heroism of the country on which he trampled; it was a protest before Heaven of the oppressed against the oppressor; but no! fearfully came his vengeance, and this brave achievement was but the ostensible cause for taking every means of defence from a people that had already been disarmed. An ukase appeared, commanding the Poles to surrender all the metal they possessed; and so rigidly was this enforced, that even the common household implements were taken away, the very knives from the tables, and the ploughshares from the fields.

The Russian was thus baffled in his hopes of possessing the palatine's mansion, and when after a time he appeared with fresh hordes to people the ruined solitude, he found the waters of the Vistula rolling over the domain, as though the noble river had risen to finish the efforts of man, and stepped between the tyrant and his prey.

A superstitious dread pervaded that spot of ruin ever after; many affirmed that the spirit of the lost Theresa would hover over it at night, and that of the exiled palatine rise from its Siberian grave, and cross the wild Ural to haunt his father's home. They believed the latter dead, for they had but heard indistinctly rumoured the cause and manner of his sudden disappearance, and a form like his was at times seen wandering stealthily on the banks of the stagnant water.

There was in truth good cause for these surmises, for it was the palatine himself who had escaped from his place of exile and returned. The hand of Heaven had rescued him thus.

On the march to Siberia the weary and fettered exile sat one evening surrounded by his guard, who were crossing a lovely and lofty pass in the deserted Ural mountains. They had kindled a watchfire, and were making preparations for their belated meal, for the pass was of such extent that they could not cross it in one day's march, obstructed as the track was with heaped-up snow.

The evening loured down, and around the peaks of the loftiest mountains might be seen gathering dun, white, massy clouds, from the outer edges of which flared long pale streaks, like streamers heralding those wan, aerial legions.

The Cossack guard looked up and trembled at the appearances portending a snow-storm, then, signing the cross, folded their fur cloaks closer, and turned to rest ; all but one, whose duty it was to watch above the prisoner.

Gradually the clouds became more dun and settled, and from peak to peak slowly sailed detached masses, like fresh legions advancing from afar to strengthen that awful host.

Presently the heavy and lifeless air was rent by a moanlike sound, coming from a distant mountain, and the prolonged but echoless howl wound along the entire chain, like the hungry cry of some approaching monster, scenting a far off prey.

The next moment a commotion was discernible amid the loftiest clouds, and then the eddy cleft their masses, and they seemed gurgling down the sides of the rocks. Anon came a blast, sharp, near, and shrill, the whole scene above, the fantastically-shaped clouds, that looked like images cut out of lead, began to shift and change, and glide past each other in strange confusion,—another pause, and the whirlwind burst from its prison, casting the snow-chains that had bound it indignantly to the earth.

The awakened guards started up as the dreadful masses fell over them, but in vain,—the fierce demon of the Ural was upon them,—in vain they struggled,—the exile beheld their writhing forms through the ever-thickening folds of the snow, that beat them down as they rose, while the mad wind hissed its ghastly music in their ears. The soldier who had waked and watched resisted the longest, and had he followed the impulse of his prisoner, who clung to a sharp mass of rock that partly sheltered from the storm, might have escaped.

Closer and closer the white shroud swept around the doomed group, till they were visible no longer. A smooth cold surface spread over what but a few moments back was a glowing mass of life, and the terrible storm went away, yelling and singing over the distant mountains.

The prisoner was free—none but God and himself in that dreadful solitude ; he knelt and prayed, and then turned homeward. I know not how long a period he spent among those storm-haunted mountains, or through what perils he accomplished his return ; years may have passed, but after their lapse a solitary figure was seen flitting at times amid the ruins of the castle of S. It was the palatine haunting like a ghost his once happy home, and by his side was seen a fairy, or as some believed, the phantom of Theresa. It was Zaleska, his last

and loveliest daughter, who had been saved by the unswerving watchfulness of his surviving vassals, despite the search and tyranny of Orloff.

Here they lived concealed, their existence unknown, save to the count's former associates in conspiracy; and here was one of those dark places of meeting of which Russia might not dream, strict as was her vigilance. Let not a government suppose, however widely it may send its spies, however closely it may pry into the private life of the subject, that it can baffle the sure and secret march of liberty. Like the strong under-current beneath the smooth surface of an unruffled sea, it holds its way unsuspected and unexplored, sure to emerge to light, however late, and, with its calm but unconquerable force, dash the stale fabric of tyranny into endless ruin.

In his concealment the palatine still contrived to inspire and aid in the great plan of restoring Poland, and rallying his former friends around him. There, as you are aware, I beheld him for the first time—there the outburst of the revolution found him prepared for action, and all hailed his appearance as an omen of success. The dreadful debt of vengeance, impersonified in him, was more stirring than the most eloquent appeal.

* * * * *

On the evening on which I interrupted the regular course of my narrative to reveal past events, the palatine had hastened to Warsaw to prevent the free departure of the grand duke Constantine. But a fatality seemed to attend all who made the attempt. The high-souled, the brave Maurice Mochnacki scarcely escaped with life, when he urged the senate to sacrifice the tyrant. Colonel Kicki, who was afterwards called the Polish Alcibiades, enlisted a body of volunteers, and was hastening on the steps of the fugitive, when he met with an accident that detained him a prisoner in his house till the scourge of Poland had recrossed the frontier, and now the same weird fate seemed to interpose between the oppressor and the palatine.

The latter had been received with enthusiasm by the multitude, and the cheers that greeted his re-appearance from the senate-house, where he had once more resumed his place with the pomp of a Polish noble, grew deeper and louder, when it was known with what intent he had appeared, and that without the gates was gathered a band of the bravest, mounted on the fleet horses of the Ukraine, waiting but for the word of the palatine to be launched, all hot and fiery, like a thunderbolt, on the track of the flying tyrant.

Count S. was hastening to meet this devoted troop; Zaleska, the beautiful, was by his side, proceeding to accompany him to the barrier, on a coal-black steed, like a lovely genius of good towering over a fettered fiend of darkness, and with enthusiastic cheers the excited populace heralded their champion on his way. The success of the enterprise seemed certain. A strong body of the most devoted patriots would immediately accompany the palatine, and reinforcements to the amount of several thousand volunteers were prepared to join him on his way. They were sure of overtaking the grand duke before he could disentangle his army from the morasses: add to this the determined valour of the Poles, who would come fresh into action against

dispirited and worn-out troops, upon whom moreover they would rush utterly unexpected in an unguarded moment, and little doubt could be entertained as to the result.

A fierce triumphant joy burnt in the heart of the palatine at the anticipated conflict.

"They shall be silent," he said, "loud as their march may be—they shall stop, and struggle, and sink, brave as may be their bearing, when the hot torrents of the Polish battalions pour on them from every side! Clear the way, my good friends," he continued, "an errand like mine brooks no delay! Now on, brave comrades!" to the troop behind.

At this moment a horseman was seen in the distance on the verge of the crowd. His tall figure might have been discerned for some time soaring over the masses, above which the head of his gigantic charger scarcely appeared. With difficulty it seemed to press nearer, while the eye of its rider was cast searchingly around, as though endeavouring to discover one individual amid that sea of heads. Presently, when the small troop of the palatine became visible in the light cast from the illuminated ballroom, the strange horseman was seen to press on with redoubled force. He and the count, with his mounted friends, were the only objects soaring above the dense and level mass of the mob below, and an invisible attraction seemed to draw those two points to each other.

When the space was cleared on the path of the Polish troop, then the stranger, taking advantage of the opening, was seen to hurry near, rushing on like a dark thunder-cloud, till he flitted past the palatine. One word he hissed in the ear of the latter, who instantly carried his hand to his sword; but simultaneously the other sped by, and a streak of fire flashed for a moment over the spot. The palatine was seen to reel and stagger, and then fall from the saddle, while two or three bounds of his powerful charger carried the assassin far from his victim, and then leaping from his seat he lashed his horse away, and in the confusion disappeared among the crowd.

Strange as it may seem for the palatine to have been murdered in the midst of his friends and a countless multitude, for the action to have passed unnoticed, and the assassin to escape, it is nevertheless averred, and perhaps the very density of the mob, and the excitement under which it laboured, may have facilitated the escape of a cool and determined man.

Zaleska beheld all as in a horrid dream. She had long noticed the appearance of the murderer on the horizon of that living tide, and had pointed him out to her father; but the supposition of any one attacking him thus surrounded seemed too ludicrous to be entertained even for a moment. As it was, the general belief obtained that the palatine had been killed by an accidental shot amid the general *feu de joie*, and there were not a few who connected this strange event with the fatality which seemed to attend all the pursuers of Constantine.

There were some, however, among whom it was rumoured that the palatine had fallen by the hand of an emissary of Orloff, (nay, some said by his own,) and strange tales were circulated as to what were

the incentives, and what was to be the reward of so dangerous and almost hopeless an undertaking.

The deed is done—the last pulsation of that gallant heart is stilled—the present is again before us.

I raised Zaleska from the ground, and gently pressed her cold form towards me. Amid that multitude I saw, I felt but her. “Protect her—I confide her to your care!” were the last words of the palatine ere he died, and I swore to obey and justify his behest.

I will not tell you what passed further. What care any, what care even you, who are my friend, for the mute progress of our love?—mute, for, amid those vast aspirations, love, though it burned as deep, but seldom found a voice.

O the hopes of our hearts—the dearest, brightest, best, are trampled down by our fellow-men, like flowers beneath an army! And how many a harrowing grief, how many a deep lesson remains unnoticed and untold! *Time* flies away with a countless load of events—*History*, the saving genius, throws herself in his path—he hurries on, and as he rushes past she snatches at his burden, and saves some few events from the exulting robber. Yet, alas! but too often she grasps the gaudy and useless, lured by its glitter, and allows the sterling and useful to pass by unnoticed. Thence, doubtlessly, *History* is represented as a woman. Sometimes, peradventure, she will gain a glorious treasure; then she will go and exult over it in secret, keeping it to herself a long, long time, till at length she brings it forth, distorted, magnified or diminished, and laughs and chuckles at the bright phantom she has conjured from *Time*, whose other name is *Oblivion*.

Fate was hurrying Poland on to *Grochow*. Every day, every hour teemed with some great event, and to the immortal honour of Poland be it, that amid the grand majestic rising of an outraged nation no innocent blood was shed, no murder stained the young heaven of its liberty. Notwithstanding the direful wrongs it had suffered, now when power was given to revenge, it never once misused the fearful gift, but sought peace, peace at any price, so that it was not bought with infamy and slavery. Thence the negotiations between the dictator and the czar; and when, as might be foreseen, they ended in the insults of the arrogant autocrat, then Poland drew up its protest to the world, then her devoted children raised the watchword of freedom in the foul dens of tyranny; and when they were betrayed, deserted, outraged by the banded despots of earth, then she displayed her own magnificent resources, not of wealth and numbers, but the noble courage of a few—then she stood forth over the ashes of her former greatness, like a bereft child fighting on its father's grave.

But first every method was tried that a dignified and moderate policy could resort to. The question was first debated between the Polish senate and the Russian czar; Lubecki and Jezierski were severally sent to St. Petersburg, to return with messages of insult and indignity; then, when justice could no longer be expected from Nicholas, when even its show was thrown aside, the brave people,

scorning submission, proclaimed their independence, and published those thrilling manifestoes that became so famous over Europe.

I will not narrate the changes in the government, nor the rise and destruction of the various factions, that took place before its final formation. Suffice it to say, that owing to Chlopicki's non-use of the power entrusted to him, (he was a great general, but no statesman,) the legislature was changed from a single dictator to a diet of one hundred and fifty members, which was opened on the 19th of January by Prince Adam Czartoryski. The senators and deputies signed the nation's manifesto to Europe, depriving the house of Romanoff of the Polish crown, absolving all Poles from their allegiance to the czar, and decreeing the national independence.

Soon afterwards Prince Radziwill was appointed to the command of the army, and accepted the high trust with the words, "Such as I have been I shall remain."

Thus everything was drawing towards its completion, and the still discordant elements were dispersed by the wisdom of legislature. A faction under Lelewel, Roman Soltyk, and Maurice Mochnacki, constituted itself into a "Patriotic Society," and announced its formation to the diet.

"Away with your Patriotic Societies—every man in the nation is a patriot!" exclaimed the indignant deputies, and the faction vanished before the lofty words.

In vain the wreck of this party attempted to stir the citizens; in vain it instituted festivals and processions in honour of Poland's ancient martyrs: they were solemn, heart-stirring pageants, but they only united all the more in the one great cause.

On the 25th of January the formal deposition of Nicholas was to take place, and on the same day, in glorious contrast, a funeral procession, commemorative of those champions of Russian liberty who perished in 1826, moved from the gates of the university.

Immense multitudes accompanied the funeral train, in which the academic guard bore a coffin dedicated to Ryleyeff, Bestuzeff, Pestel, Muravieff, and Kochowski, whose names were graven on five suits of armour borne behind the bier.

Some turbulent spirits, foremost of their number Gurowski, tried to excite the multitude by inflammatory addresses, but in vain; the people now confided in their leaders, and looked forward only to the horizon of their future, in which light was struggling with darkness in fearful and unequal strife.

A far different and memorable scene was enacting in the diet. Jezierski had delivered the reply of the autocrat, and the two proclamations of the Russian field-marshal, Diebitch Zabalkansky, had been read, adding fuel to the fire of indignation, commanding the Poles to submit, and erect scaffolds for the leaders of the rebellion, or expect extermination at the hands of the all-powerful czar. Then the marshal of the diet, with a burst of lofty enthusiasm, delivered an impassioned address, summoning the nation formally to depose the tyrant, who girt his throne with war and death.

Deep silence succeeded his summons, like a shadow following fire.

Then Ledochowski arose, and in a voice of thunder spoke those memorable words that found an echo where none had ever been.

"Let our lips speak the thoughts of our hearts! Shout as with one voice, *Away with Nicholas!*"

"*Away with Nicholas!*" rang from every side of that historic hall, as the senate was carried by the energy of Ledochowski. The poet Niemcewicz drew up the act of deposition, and in that hour the revolution was perfected.

The 29th beheld its internal formation completed, the power of the constitutional king being vested in the hands of five persons, who were to represent the "National Government of the kingdom of Poland," in which all measures were to be decided by the majority. Prince Czartoryski was unanimously elected president; the other members were Vincent Niemeiowski, Theophile Morawski, Stanislaus Barzykowski, and Lelewel.

The revolutionary legislature terminated on the 4th of February, when Poland was declared a constitutional monarchy, and its ancient throne was again open to the princes of Europe, not as of old, glowing with victories and splendour, but storm-battered, an uneasy seat, with a sword for a sceptre, and battles for its pageants.

Pursuant to this noble assumption of national independence, the Polish people, expecting and relying on the assistance of the various states of Europe, sent their envoys abroad to those courts, from most of whom they had received assurances of support.

Prussia, most intimately concerned in these events, might have acted a noble part, and one which would have been more to her advantage, than fostering the dangerous and overwhelming power of Russia. But she proved herself an able assistant to the latter, and strove to her utmost to oppress the brave and devoted people now struggling for their rights. The Prussian consul was recalled from Warsaw, all supplies of money and arms were intercepted, and the gallant exiles returning to their native land arrested and imprisoned, while a cabinet order forbade all Poles of the Grand Duchy of Posen to cross the frontier, on pain of confiscation, notwithstanding which numbers repaired to Warsaw. Colonel Szyrma, the former commander of the Academic Guard, on his way to England with the national manifesto, was incarcerated at Breslau, and, on the erroneous report that the Russians had taken Warsaw, escorted to the confines by *Land-Dragoner*, who were charged to surrender him to the Cossacks, and take a receipt as for goods delivered. Austria, fearing the encroachments of Russia, evinced a more friendly feeling, but withheld all support, (except leaving its frontiers open for a considerable time,) whilst Count Roman Zaluski was not even allowed to land in Sweden.

The Marquis Wielopolski, on his arrival in London, found the Grey administration determined to maintain peace at any cost, and his appeal to the magnanimous nation found no other reply, elicited no other sympathy, than the unbought eulogiums of an independent press.

The chief hopes of Poland were fixed on France, who, always an ally and at times a friend, seemed now summoned to hold forth an aiding hand more powerfully than ever, since the revolution of July.

The envoy, Wolicki, was received with distinction in Paris, for Sebastiani looked upon the Polish Revolution as a fortunate event for France, which beheld itself placed in a critical and embarrassing position by internal dissension, the affairs of Belgium, and the threats of Russia. The minister, well aware that Russia would be wholly occupied for some time by the revolt of the Poles, in whose armies he once had served, and whose heroism he justly estimated, received the envoy with the most encouraging promises, and a show of protection he took suitable measures to have magnified to the Russian cabinet. This extorted from the latter the concession he wished to obtain; namely, the recognition of Louis Philippe. After this point had been gained, Sebastiani dropped the affair, with the wish that the Poles would arrange their differences amicably with the Russian government.

Owing to the spirited efforts of Lafayette,—be honour to his memory!—Bignon and Lamarque, the Duke de Montemart was sent on a mission to St. Petersburg, but merely authorized to act in adherence to the treaty of Vienna. His mission, only intended to pacify the factions of France, soon ceased, for the deposition of Nicholas had taken place before the duke reached his destination.

Thus ended Poland's hopes of aid and sympathy, and she stood in her utter abandonment, proud, sorrowing, and beautiful, a sad and lovely image, destined to float on for ever in the tide of history!

But not in vain shall her heroes have bled, holy martyrs for mankind,—not in vain those sacred voices have rung over the earth: the spark struck far—and it shall kindle farther,—from the central heart of Poland it darted to the confines; the remote provinces of the ancient empire, long separated, half forgotten, responded to the stirring call of the diet, and as Constantine passed, like a ghastly phantom engendered by the corruption of dying tyranny, a horrid and unnatural birth, as he passed, with the first martyr of New Poland, the gallant Lukasinski, drawn, haggard, wild, and spectral, from his fearful dungeon, and held before the eyes of all, chained to a cannon like an untamed beast, then the electric fire flew from heart to heart.

“We wish to embrace the representatives of ancient Poland to her farthest confines within these walls!” Thus spoke the members of the diet in Warsaw,—a wild wish, that hope could scarcely dream to see realized—but they *came* from her farthest confines, where memory of Poland was scarce supposed to live, and through the gates of the historic city streamed the bold legions from afar. Band after band they came, proud, glorious guests within these venerable walls;—even the Mahomedan Tatars, on their tameless steeds, the soldier-citizens of Cracow, the brilliant cavalry of Kuszel, the Mazours, the Cracouses of Poniatowski, the volunteers of Kalish, and the lancers of Zamoyski. Zamoyski, name dear to every Pole! five brothers served at the same time in different regiments; that ancient and wealthy house put forth its last strength in an immortal effort for its country.

“To arms, Poles!” rang from the palace of Sobieski; “To arms, to arms!” sounded from Augustow to the Baltic. Monastery, altar, college, were deserted by monk and priest and student; the church-bells were torn from the towers and converted into cannon, changing their mellow music to discordant thunder, but they rung forth as sa-

ered a larum on the field of battle as over God's own altar!—The walls of the houses were scraped to find materials for gunpowder, the lovely daughters of Poland severed their long tresses to furnish cables for the arsenals, soldiers refused their pay to enrich the treasury of the rising kingdom; every private of the fourth of the line gave thirty roubles, his savings during seven years; family plate, hereditary jewels, with which, under other circumstances, the possessor would not have parted save with life, were cheerfully bestowed; the diet called on the citizens to assist in raising works around Praga, situated on the Vistula opposite Warsaw, and at her summons her thousands came, of every rank and age, delicate women and children not shunning the deadly labour; peers and prelates, mixed with the humblest of their countrymen, toiled from morning till night at the gigantic undertaking. A hundred beautiful girls from the country, bearing spades, proceeded in procession to the walls. I met their advancing train as they came, led by a beauteous form in vestal white, with purple ribands in her rich dark hair and a banner in her hand, on which glowed in golden letters the fervent lines of a national bard. How the hearts of the Poles thrilled at such a sight! It wrought like inspiration. That girl was Zaleska! that band was hers!—Fair daughters of my native land, who faint at the thought of danger and frown in scorn at the word labour, hear this, and blush!—O, you may not dream of the intense enthusiasm pervading all; you must have lived on the spot, have had your feelings wrought to almost madness by outrage and oppression, beheld every heart around you glowing with one intense and glorious feeling,—and then you might speak and sneer,—but till then be silent—dare not smile at or accuse the fervour of my words.

Among the throng that laboured at the walls, was one whose memory should not be all forgotten. He was a poor artisan of Warsaw, whose father had been murdered in the horrid massacre under Suwarrow. Day and night, without intermission, he laboured at the works, which he thought would keep out the banded ruffians from the homes of his kindred. He took no pause nor rest, and the immense labour he accomplished was almost incredible. I worked by his side, but he never would accompany me home at night, and every day I marked the fever burn keener in his eyes. Nothing would induce him to desist, and one morning we found him a corse, resting on the spade he still continued to grasp, and by his side was a scroll, containing his last request, that his body might be embedded in the wall; thus even in death to assist in the defence of the capital. It was complied with—and soon the Russian balls, playing against his tomb, that crowned the rampart, were destined to start his spirit from its hallowed sleep.

Such was the fervour with which the Poles awaited the armies of Russia, that were advancing in deep concentrated bodies along the entire frontier, like a vast wave coming to engulph the land;—two hundred thousand men, with four hundred cannon, bore surging and thundering down on one devoted spot.

KARL.

TALES OF THE PUMP-ROOM. No. III.

A LADY'S ASCENT OF MONT BLANC.

" Now, by the world, it is a lusty wench !
O let me see thee walk ! thou dost not halt ! "

SHAKSPEARE.

I AM not aware that, in a country where female courage and female pedestrianism are so highly appreciated and cultivated as in England, any authentic account has yet appeared of an event so creditable to both, and so unique in itself, as the successful ascent *by a lady* of the summit of Mont Blanc, and feel little doubt that its stirring narration will find favour in the eyes of my fair countrywomen. Nor will it be perused with the less interest, (in an age when national prejudices and rivalries are happily laid aside,) that the achievement should have been reserved for a daughter of France—a land whose habits, less favourable to out-door exercise, only enhance the energy and facility with which one among its privileged classes undertook and completed her formidable task, especially when it is remembered, as a salvo to any lurking jealousy, that but for the alleged impracticability of the ascent for females, (the famous Marie du Mont Blanc having been carried during its later and more arduous stages by the guide to whom she was betrothed,) two English ladies would have preceded in the honours of the adventure, though perhaps not in its auspicious results, the fortunate Mademoiselle D'Angeville. These adventurous pedestrians, a mother and daughter, had previously vindicated the character for daring of their country, by penetrating over the *Col du Géant* into the *Allée Blanche* in Piedmont, an expedition which only enhanced their longing to add to it an ascent of Mont Blanc.

This premised, we must turn to her for whom was reserved the honour of its accomplishment, and whom the lucky chance which sent me at the same time to Chamouni enables me, for the edification of my fair friends, accurately to describe. Mademoiselle D'Angeville, our heroine, as she may well be called with more than usual appropriateness, was born and brought up at a chateau near St. Lambert, in the department of the Aire, at the foot of the western range of the Jura, and surrounded by pile on pile of rugged and nearly inaccessible mountains, amid which she early accustomed herself to make excursions, having on one occasion performed on foot, in four days, a distance of sixty French leagues.

This might have seemed incredible to those who looked only on her slight figure and small delicate foot, had not an unusual degree of vivacity in her eye, and determination in her general aspect, mingled with the frankness and energy of her conversation, given tokens of no ordinary character. She could, however, at no time of her life have been handsome, and was, at the period of her expedition, (in Septem-

ber, 1838,) two-and-forty years of age. She assured me that, for the last ten, ever since her first view, in all the glories of a glowing sunset, of the renowned Mont Blanc, she had experienced a daily-increasing desire to stand on its summit, a feeling which gave rise first to a protracted sojourn at Geneva, whence, as is well known, the mountain monarch and his satellites are seen to peculiar advantage; and then Mademoiselle D'Angeville, being far from wealthy, resorted to a system of strict economy, by which alone the large sum indispensable for the prosecution of her favourite project could be obtained. This being now completed, the present summer, she determined and felt convinced, should witness its realization.

It was about the 1st of September that Mademoiselle D'Angeville arrived from Geneva at Chamouni, at the Hotel de l' Union, where her intentions soon became known. Every one, not excepting the guides, united in dissuading her from her purpose, but, finding her resolute in it, arrangements were at length entered into by which the safety of so enterprising a damsel might be most effectually secured. She chose Joseph Coutet, who had already been seven times up the mountain, as the leader of her band, consisting of five other guides and two bearers, nine persons in all.

The garb adopted by her seemed well adapted to the adventurous exploit, and may be recorded for the benefit of future female pilgrims. Over a pair of strong pantaloons, she wore a woman's dress of thick woollen stuff, and a goat-skin mantle, similar to those of the *senn mädchen* (or dairy-maids) of the neighbouring *châlets*; on her head, a fur cap, coming well over the face, surmounted by a large straw hat; on her feet, large easy shoes and gaiters; and in her hand, the indispensable "Alpine-stick, or *bâton*, tipped with chamois horn.

The only part of the preliminary proceeding somewhat at variance with these sensible, matter-of-fact preparations, was the superfluous oration in which the fair pedestrian (a little addicted, like her countrywomen, to *belles phrases*,) reminded her well-behaved, nay, even scrupulously well-bred future comrades, of the decorum to be observed in words and behaviour towards a female companion, a hint to which the heightened colour and mutual looks of astonishment of the worthy guides formed the sole and appropriate answer. It will be seen, (as was facetiously remarked at the time by a sly old German doctor of the party at Chamouni,) that at the height of fifteen thousand feet above the Mediterranean, in presence of three kingdoms, and some dozen republics, this slight touch of prudery and pedantry had insensibly evaporated.

Lest, however, the tinge of the ludicrous shed by this characteristic trait over the real perils of the enterprise should mislead any one as to the serious light in which they are viewed by those best qualified to judge, it may be well to preface the corresponding graphic narrative of a young countryman of my own, (by the successive steps of which, as detailed by himself, I mean to enable my readers to judge of the too-lightly-passed-over difficulties attending the ascent of Mademoiselle D'Angeville,) with the sober earnestness of deportment observable the previous evening—his no less experienced guides—their unanimous request to be allowed a day to arrange their family con-

cerns—their subdued though firm demeanour, and evident sense, though modified by habitual daring, of impending and perhaps deadly peril.

It may also enhance the interest experienced in the travellers—whose arduous footsteps I intend as it were to pioneer, and trace the subsequent ones of our heroine—to learn that of the two Englishmen, who, with a Swedish artillery officer, ten guides, and six bearers, formed the band, the narrator, Mr. Atkins, was only nineteen, and an utter novice in mountain scrambling, and his countryman, Mr. Pidwell, (whose young wife was to be kept in happy ignorance of the design of the enterprise,) only three months married. Soon after four o'clock, on a cloudy August morning, the party set forth, (after a night rendered sleepless by conflicting emotions,) amid the sobering accompaniments of having their names and designations registered, in the event of a possible catastrophe, and being attended beyond the village by the weeping wives and children of several of their hitherto untried guides.

The party marched in single file, the six men bearing the knapsacks—who, after a certain point, were to return to Chamouni—leading the way; six guides following; then the gentlemen; next four guides more; and the rear being brought up by five or six stout volunteers from the neighbouring peasantry. This formidable array of numbers, while it may seem to diminish the difficulties of a party so strongly constituted, will only serve, as these are detailed in the words of the youngest among them, to enhance the prowess of the solitary female pilgrim, to whom they were comparatively light.

“About a German mile (or “stund,” five English,) from the village,” says Mr. Atkins, “began our ascent, which continued for a couple more, and brought us to a small *châlet*, where the herdsmen seek refuge from the fury of the storm. Thence a narrow goat-track winds right alongside of a frightful precipice, with a perpendicular rock in front. This was my first serious trial—but, thank God, my presence of mind did not fail, and I could gaze without dizziness into the depths of the abyss. Next came the crossing of the formidable mountain torrent, called ‘Mimont,’ to get over which it is necessary to take a flying leap, whose only landing-place is a pointed rock right in the middle of the stream, which boils and foams at an unknown depth on either side, while the slippery, insecure nature of the footing itself greatly enhances the danger. I planted my staff, however, securely among the rocks, and swung myself, without accident, happily across.

“Some very steep rocks had now to be clambered over before we reached, towards eleven o'clock, the ‘Pierre de l' Echelle, where we rested an hour and breakfasted. This rock, twenty feet high by forty broad, lies right under the ‘Aiguille du Midi,’ and from it the view is extremely fine, embracing the whole range of the Jura, a great part of Savoy, and at its foot the valley of Chamouni. The vegetation in its vicinity is abundant, consisting of rhododendron in flowery profusion, and a yet more welcome plant, called in the *patois* of the country ‘Bellosen,’ resembling myrtle, and bearing black berries extremely pleasant and refreshing.

“On our left rushed the streams from the ‘Glacier de Bossons,’ to which every step brought us nearer; and as we advanced, a huge block of granite, which we had just trod on, fell thundering down behind us, waking a lengthened echo from the thousand peaks and needles amid which we were scrambling. I took advantage of a slight halt to sketch our line of march, not forgetting Michael Balmét’s little dog, which accompanied us the whole way, being the first of his race that ever reached the summit of Mont Blanc. It was pretty to see how this small and apparently weak animal jumped like a chamois over the rocks, in the track pointed out to it by its experienced master.

“In about half an hour we came to the first dangerous cleft in the Glacier de Bossons. The narrow crystal valley may here be about an English mile long, intersected in every direction by frightful fissures, many of them four hundred feet deep. The renowned ‘Mer de Glace’ of Chamouni seems as nothing, compared with a scene where everything (dangers included) is on a gigantic scale. Here our six bearers took leave of us, not without a moment of painful emotion on both sides. The voices of these strong and brave men, accustomed to perils from their youth, faltered as, bidding us in few words farewell, they shook us by the hand, and wended their way back to the village. I had hitherto kept always between David Folliquet and Michael Balmét. The former now squeezed my hand, in token, as he said, of friendship, and adding, ‘Henceforward, young gentleman, your only safety will lie in unlimited confidence in me,’ relapsed into a silence, which, communicative as the guides are on all ordinary occasions, always marks their sense of dangers which can only be surmounted by entire self-possession.

“One might indite a volume on the splendour, majesty, and beauty of the ‘Glacier de Bossons,’ were it practicable to dwell on and enjoy them at leisure. This, however, cannot be done, for who could adequately describe when springing for very life across foaming and thundering torrents, or scaling, in footsteps hewn by the guides, some perpendicular wall of ice, or leaping across a yawning chasm on a frail ledge of snow, which a moment will suffice to make disappear with its human burden?—even the diamond obelisks, temples, and grottos, formed by the fantastically piled rocks of crystal, often rising singly like huge pillars from the mass, festooned in every imaginable form of grace with canopies and draperies of ice of every rainbow hue, and realizing in their wildest exuberance the dreams of poetic fancy in the creation of its glacier spirits and ondines. To linger even a moment amid such perilous beauties would be gaining little, and risking much. All must be hastily glanced at with the mind firmly braced, and the nerves strung for vigorous exertion, lest the delay of even a few minutes should involve a faintness, depression, and indisposition for further effort, which, on the threshold of so hazardous an undertaking, would prove fatal to its accomplishment.

“My favourite place in the line of march was generally the rear, which had its advantages and disadvantages. Of course the former lay in the benefit of treading in the footsteps hewn and beaten by the previous pilgrims; but this was counterbalanced by finding the snow

bridges, already crossed by the weight of twelve men, often in a most treacherous condition. My Swedish and English comrades made the better pioneers, from having already had experience in scrambling among the mountains of Norway; the former, nevertheless, had a narrow escape, from his foot slipping while springing across a chasm, when, but for his self-possession in firmly planting his staff, and hanging on by it till assistance came, he must inevitably have perished.

"I had a still worse adventure in crossing a similar fissure, the opposite brink of which was considerably higher than that from whence the leap had to be taken, while the footstep cut in the latter by the guides, and used by my predecessors, had sunk proportionably, and, just as I was standing on it, fairly gave way. To the latest day of my life I shall never forget what I felt while all but engulfed in a two-hundred-feet deep chasm, which, as it yearned to receive me, displayed horrid rows of sharp and serrated icy teeth, on which it might have been my fate to lie mangled, without perhaps being killed outright. My last hour I certainly thought was come, and so it would have been, had not Folliquet, throwing a rope hastily round him, sprang, at the risk of his life, like lightning to my side, and seizing me by the collar, swung me, as his giant strength alone enabled him to do, fairly across the abyss.

"Thenceforward I was attached by a rope to my faithful precursor, who indeed would scarcely, when practicable, be induced to quit hold of my hand. Sometimes, however, we had to scramble, as we best might, up slender ladders, along icy ramparts, from whose summits, pinnacles, sharp as the sword of Damocles, hung suspended over our heads, which a word might suffice to dislodge. We forgot the danger, however, in the inexpressible magnificence of the scene, whose transparent halls, and domes, and galleries, and pyramids, the noon-day sun was illuminating with a thousand rainbow tints. Sometimes our path lay amid depths sacred to the haunts of the glacier and mountain elves alone, hemmed in on every side by caves of unexplored extent and ramifications, or surrounded by the more changeful aspect of countless crystal palaces, displaying many an order of fantastic architecture undreamt of by ancients and moderns, and lit up by fairy hues more unimaginable still, from the 'purest ray serene' of the diamond to depths of green and azure elsewhere utterly unknown.

"I found it now high time to defend my eyes with dark spectacles, and put on the green veil with which I had been provided. We next prepared to scale a thirty-feet wall, having reached the foot of the 'Grands Mulets,' or a group of steep, almost perpendicular rocks, rising in solitary grandeur like a beacon tower from the surrounding icy sea.

"Between the glacier and the rocks there lies a deep gully, across which we had to scramble or swing ourselves. Climbing the rocks themselves is a service of especial danger, rendered not less so in our case by the very *mal-à-propos* running in between our legs of the little dog; while the crumbling nature of the materials, long exposed to weather in so stormy a latitude, increases the difficulty. About midway up we caught another glimpse of Chamouni, where friends

with telescopes were watching our progress; while another party, to gain a fuller view of almost every step of it, had stationed themselves on 'Mont Breven' right opposite to Mont Blanc, whence they communicated by signals with those interested in the village; chiefly on account of my countryman's young bride, from whom it had been impossible to conceal her husband's expedition, and who was proportionately uneasy about its result.

"After climbing to the height of about three hundred feet, the path turns to the right, to the spot where the night is usually passed. We reached it at about half-past four; and my first anxiety was to find water, being excessively thirsty. One of the guides and myself, however, sought long for any in vain, and I had to endure my thirst for a quarter of an hour longer, which the sun, having yet some warmth, sufficed to melt snow for a draught, the wine which the guides drank proving too strong for my purpose.

"The sky, at this elevation of nine thousand five hundred feet above the sea, was of the deepest blue, and the sun shed its rays with a golden brilliancy unknown in lower regions. Light fleecy clouds skirted the horizon, and robbed us of the view of Chamouni, but before us lay stretched the Lake of Geneva like a silver thread, the whole chain of the Jura, and the distant plains of France beyond; while near, the eye could take in the entire extent of Switzerland over the "diminished heads" of the intervening mountains of Buet and the Môle.

"This spot, now the usual sleeping place for travellers, was not originally deemed tenable; and Saussure passed the night about five hundred feet higher on the snowy plain, in which his guides dug a hole scarcely two feet deep, stretching over it a blanket, on whose edges they piled snow to keep it down. One advantage, however, of this scanty bivouac was that, the philosopher suffered so little from the cold as to be frequently during the night obliged to creep out of his lair in quest of air.

"Nor are pilgrims at the Grands Mulets much better off for elbow-room, the whole extent of the level space being ten or twelve feet long by four broad, bounded on three sides by a three-hundred-feet-deep precipice, and flanked by a perpendicular rock. Against this the guides laid seven of their staves in a sloping position as a support to a blanket-tent, whose interior afforded a breadth of about four feet for the travellers to pack into and sleep as best they might.

These arrangements completed, the party dined, the ear and eye gratified, from their securely isolated position, with the sound and sight of innumerable avalanches, and the spectacle of a magnificent sunset behind the Jura. Seven of the party then sought shelter beneath the tent, while the remaining guides, after joining in their evening hymn, ensconced themselves, to avoid the cold, (five degrees below freezing of Reaumur,) in clefts of the adjoining rocks."

The foregoing details, rendered probably more minute and graphic by the narrator being a novice in mountain expeditions, have been given less for their intrinsic merits, as a faithful and satisfactory sketch of an often-recounted enterprise, than to place before their reader, step by step, the difficulties and dangers—happily, nay, almost

without admission of their extent or existence—surmounted by the *female* pilgrim, whose success it is the object of this article to commemorate.

“Without difficulty, nay, almost without inconvenience,” says *her* chronicler, “did this bold mountain traveller traverse the torrent of Mimont, climb the rocks of Pierre de l’Echelle, cross the formidable Glacier de Bossons, and scale the obelisk-like peaks of the ‘Grands Mulets,’ whence, as *souvenirs* of the spot, she wrote little notes to various of her friends. She was unable, though in perfect health, to sleep; but enjoyed throughout the most brilliant moonlight night the magnificent prospect of the towering snowy peaks above and the boundless icy sea beneath, the magical effect of which was heightened ever and anon by the rushing and thundering of avalanches from the overhanging ‘Dent du Midi.’

“Having remarked, while gazing around her, that Mermier, one of her guides, had chosen for his night’s quarters a rocky ridge, so narrow that his legs dangled on either side over an unfathomable abyss, into which the slightest motion threatened to precipitate him, she awoke him, and was amused with the stare of astonishment with which he assured her he should be thankful, if in all his mountain expeditions he could fall in with so good a bed.

“At three o’clock the party were once more astir, and the guides breakfasted heartily; but Mademoiselle D’Angeville felt no hunger, and contented herself with five dried prunes, and some snow, which frugal meal sufficed her from Chamouni to the summit of Mont Blanc, where her appetite first returned. During the guides’ meal she retired into the tent, and doffing her cumbersome feminine garments, reappeared for the arduous residue of the journey in male attire.”

This reminds us of her male precursors, to whose journal we must now recur, for particulars equally applicable to her own ascent, though passed lightly over in her case (as previously given in theirs) by the compiler of both narratives.

At two in the morning, the light slumbers of such among them as could snatch a little repose, (the chief obstacle, by the way, to which, with one of the English gentlemen, was the singular annoyance, at ten thousand feet above the sea, and amid perpetual snow, of *bugs*,) were pleasingly broken by the guides’ morning hymn, and their exhortation to avail themselves of the bright moonlight which shone clear as day amid the mountains, while all in the valley seemed buried in clouds and shadow. Less abstemious than their female rival, the gentlemen discussed a frozen fowl, and then set forward on their journey, bidding adieu to a couple of peasant volunteers, whose curiosity was not strong enough to carry them any farther.

“With spirits refreshed,” says our young countryman, “we scrambled—no easy task—down from our rocky bivouac, and crossed with unusual facility the glacier of Tacernaz, in consequence of the snow being hard enough to bear us. From thence our march led always to the right, towards the Dome du Gouté; and our next difficulty lay in scaling the ‘Petites Montées,’ a wall some seventy feet high, but looking more like three hundred, so completely are relative dimensions confounded amid the higher Alps. The rocks

are nearly perpendicular, and it took us nearly three quarters of an hour to climb them, when we reached the Petit Plateau, whose clefts, though of rarer occurrence, are formidably wide. We managed to cross them, however, on temporary bridges of various sorts, some of snow drifts merely, others of the debris of late avalanches.

"As the day advanced, these ice and snow bridges became fearfully insecure, and required the most wary walking; nor did any of us henceforth attempt them without being attached by a rope to the guide who preceded, and cautiously sounded with his long staff at every step he moved. We next arrived at the foot of the 'Grandes Montées,' which in an hour's time of excessive exertion we surmounted, and at a quarter past six reached the 'Grand Plateau,' a wide dismal snowy plain, eleven thousand feet above the sea, from which rise in every direction the most savage and awful icy peaks. Here we halted to breakfast, and the guides produced from their knapsacks more frozen fowls, frozen bread, and, stranger still, frozen wine! We thought it all, however, mighty good, although we had no small trouble in thawing our eatables, and holding the frozen wine *morsels* long enough in our mouths.

"We soon found, in spite of these refreshments, that we must not prolong our halt, if we would escape the misfortune of frost-bitten feet, which befel our predecessor Count Tilly. At the expiration of twenty minutes we were again off, taking the path towards the 'Petits Mulets,' and leaving the 'Rochers rouges' to the left. Here the summit of the mountain appeared to rise above our heads to about a thousand feet, whereas in reality it was, alas! more than three thousand.

"From the Grand Plateau we turned toward the 'Mont Maudit,' one of the most easterly pinnacles of Mont Blanc; and from this spot our dangers and difficulties every moment increased. Our path lay for long on the brink of a fearful precipice, down which one false step would have sufficed to plunge us; and this too precisely on the spot most liable to avalanches, in which the utterance of a single syllable was prohibited by the guides—a rash word, or the casual flight of the tiniest bird, sufficing to detach a mass capable of annihilating the whole party. In this immediate neighbourhood occurred the similar catastrophe, by which three of the unfortunate guides of Dr. Hannel were overtaken, and swept into the abyss, in 1820; and one of our present attendants, Julien Duvaoussour, who, also hurried away by the same avalanche, owed his escape to its diminished velocity, which enabled him, he yet scarce knows how, to extricate himself from it, pointed out, with a silence more significant than words, the spot where his three unhappy comrades had now for seventeen years lain imbedded in their icy sepulchre. Silently and with heavy hearts did we too turn from the fearful chasm, in which, a few minutes later, a lawine which rushed from the Dome du Gouté upon our very track, would have sent us to join them. This danger we escaped, as if by miracle, on a second occasion.

"To reach the 'Petits Mulets' in a right line being impossible, we had to follow a zigzag course, each treading warily in the footsteps of our pioneers, who again felt their way with their staves. These pre-

cautions might secure us against falling, but avalanches could only be averted from our heads by a higher power. Now ever since we had left the Grand Plateau for the 'Petits Mulets,' and formidable 'Mur de la Côte,' my troubles had fairly begun; and even while crossing the former, I had with the utmost difficulty kept in view my companions; who, on arriving at the latter, awaited my approach, that we might all keep together again when the climbing began. At this very instant a huge avalanche from the Dome du Gouté swept over and obliterated the narrow footpath we should, but for this providential halt, have been pursuing, and from whence we could not have failed to be all hurled by a catastrophe, of whose ravages we, on our return, shuddered to view the effects, in the entire demolition of the unlucky path.

"I now walked—if walking such involuntary locomotion could be called—between Folliquet and the younger Coutet; but was forced to stop every ten steps to take breath, and allow my weary limbs to recruit a little strength. Not only did I suffer cruelly from thirst, but felt thoroughly exhausted and knocked up. From time to time I refreshed my parched mouth with a little vinegar, while my nose kept bleeding continually. Even the guides began to suffer great uneasiness, and Folliquet could no longer carry his head upright. Some of our advanced guard swayed from right to left, some staggered and fell at every other step. One man even lay stretched out senseless at the foot of the 'Mur de la Côte;' but such was my present state of exhaustion, that deeply as at any other time I should have felt interested about him, I never even asked who he was. The little dog too became strangely affected, and gazed about him with evident anxiety and astonishment. Even at the Grand Plateau he had struggled manfully with drowsiness, now creeping, at every momentary halt, to gather warmth among our feet, now rousing himself up for an effort at running, and then every minute tumbling down done up. One only advantage he had over his master, and that was his unfailing appetite; for the remaining bones of the fowls were no sooner thrown to him than they disappeared, and he either felt no thirst, or quenched it as he ran with snow.

"As I lay in this painful condition, more dead than alive, one of the guides, named Cupellin, came running past me towards the front, calling out "Courage, courage, Monsieur! nous serons là haut bientôt!" from which I gathered but slender encouragement, knowing pretty well what 'presently' meant in these good people's language, and that we had before us an almost perpendicular wall of snow; when forced to halt a moment in ascending which, we were fain to cling to it with both hands and feet, nay, to rest our very heads on it for safety. Yet I suffered less here than on the Petits Mulets, as I could refresh myself now and then with snow, during the fifty minutes it cost us to surmount this wall of about two hundred and fifty feet in height. From my increasing exhaustion, I had pretty nearly given up all hopes of reaching the summit, seeing alps upon alps yet towering beyond each other; but an opportune snow-plain, which now occurred, afforded me means of breathing, and even of making up to my companions, neither of whom, as they assured me, experienced

any inconvenience from the rarity of the atmosphere. This was the first time, since our breakfast together at the Grand Plateau, that I had exchanged words with them, each having enough to do with his own progress and safety. At ten thousand feet above the sea I fear all men must plead guilty to selfishness, however little addicted to it in less elevated regions.

"After twenty minutes' halt to take breath, we set off in marching order to face the final ascent of about one hundred and fifty feet which lay between us and our goal. The air had now become so rarified, that nearly all the party were compelled to lean forward almost double, to be able to draw breath at all. Our Swedish friend, however, less affected, had availed himself of it to make a run forward, and if possible be first on the summit, for which he had nearly paid dear; for he soon fell utterly exhausted on the snow, where he was seized with pains in the limbs, the effects of which he felt long afterwards. The snow here was thoroughly pulverized, and now and then we had to summon our sinking energies to leap across suspicious openings, concealing no doubt in their depths unfathomable crevices. Having to stand still every two minutes during this last ascent, it took us a good hour and incredible exertions to reach, at half-past nine on Wednesday, the 23d of August, eight hours after leaving our night's quarters at the 'Grands Mulets,' the summit of Mont Blanc. We wished each other mutually joy, and all sought at first the southern face of the mountain, as being a degree less cold than the northern, by which we had come up. As for me, I was so exhausted and knocked up, that I rolled myself in a blanket, and I lay for near half an hour with my head on the knee of one of the guides in a half sleeping, half fainting condition. As soon as I could muster strength, I turned with two of our cicerones in the direction of the Apennines. Hedzengen instinctively turned his face north towards his far country, and Pidwell gazed westward. Each of us felt an inward whisper that at such a moment he was best alone."

So far we have given our young countryman's story in his own words, but before comparing notes, as to the result of their aerial observations, between the two parties we have been simultaneously accompanying, courtesy demands that we should see the lady safe landed at her journey's end. And it must, we fear, have afforded a degree of secret satisfaction to those male competitors, whom she continued up to an advanced period of it not only to outdo, (surmounting gaily and lightly, to the astonishment of her guides, the formidable stages of the Petites and Grandes Montées, and Petit and Grand Plateau,) but actually to laugh to scorn, expressing her surprise that *men* should have adopted so many needless precautions, and submitted to be bound to their guides by ropes—that this undaunted mountain heroine at length yielded to the lot of mortality, and gave tokens of excessive fatigue. To our young countryman individually it may have been a solace to learn that he and the lady became *hors de combat* at the same precise point of their labours, viz. the Petits Mulets; though it was not until reaching the Mur de la Côte, the formidable icy wall before described, rising at an angle of some eighty or eighty-two degrees, that she, as well as the majority of her guides,

nearly gave in, and but for their leader Coutet, who manfully held out, and cut steps for her and his fellows in the ice, the expedition must have been given up.

The once bold and stalwart female traveller now felt, in addition to her bodily fatigue, such mental depression, from a sensation of tightness across the chest, and as it were molten lead rushing through the veins, that she herself assured Dr. Muller she had to rouse all her remaining energies to summon resolution to proceed; while she never alluded to this painful moment but by the significant title of her "agony." She was now fain to submit to be attached by a rope to her faithful old guide, and on one of the many occasions when she had sank beside him, in too great exhaustion to be able to articulate, she heard him exclaim, "No! never again will I take a *woman* up Mont Blanc!"

Having playfully reproached him, at a later period, for this ungalant speech, Coutet replied that her situation had appeared to him so very alarming from the frightful tension of her nerves and muscles, and the expression of her features so much resembled those of a dying person, that he every minute expected to see her fall down dead on the snow beside him. Happily, her strength returned in a sufficient degree to enable her, by his powerful help, to drag herself at length to the summit of the mountain, and of her long-cherished hopes, on Thursday, the 4th September, at fifty-five minutes past noon.

From the very moment that Mademoiselle D'Angeville inhaled the air of this privileged spot, she felt, contrary to the experience of almost every previous traveller, strengthened and refreshed; and not only free from indisposition, but light, active, and exhilarated in body and mind. Nor was this the only metamorphosis achieved by the elevation; for the prudery we had seen displayed by the lady before quitting the valley, gave place to the most natural and winning frankness: and when old Coutet claimed his well-earned privilege of a kiss, it was accorded with the utmost good-nature and readiness. So that, in addition to the meteorological observations of Saussure, (perhaps the only one which the lapse of fifty-two years has afforded,) may now be registered, viz. the influence of the most elevated spot in Europe in modifying the female temperament and character.

The courtesy of his fair charge awoke in the old guide such a corresponding spirit of chivalrous gallantry, that exclaiming, "We must have Mademoiselle *higher* than Mont Blanc, which is what no one before her has ever been able to boast!" he gave a signal to his comrades, and the lady was raised, by their joint efforts, shoulder high from the ground. After this supplementary ascent, the refreshments were unpacked, and the female traveller gave tokens of having found her appetite where the generality of her predecessors lost theirs. She ate most heartily, and quaffed, as a loyal Frenchwoman, a glass of champagne to the health of the infant Count of Paris. Immediately after, she continued her aerial correspondence, having written from hence four or five little notes to her relations in Geneva and its neighbourhood, with a dash, if we may venture to say so, of the same vanity which caused Napoleon to dictate decrees from the Kremlin at Moscow. She was soon, however, reminded of the necessity of closing

her correspondence, as little enough time would be allowed her for the more interesting and necessary employment of surveying, under the serenest and most favourable sky, perhaps, ever traveller was favoured with, an extent of prospect vouchsafed to few, if any, previous pilgrims to Mont Blanc.

As, however, her immediate precursor seems to have been equally fortunate, and is, as usual, more detailed in his description of the views enjoyed by himself and party, it may be well to revert to his journal for the several features of the panorama as successively pointed out to him by his guide, and noted on the spot.

"I took," says he, "my note-book in my hand, and requested Julien Devouassour to name, one by one, the various objects by which we were surrounded. He began his enumeration with Piedmont, the whole north of Italy, Monte Viso, the Maritime and Cottian Alps; then followed the valley of the Isere, the plains of Lombardy and Milan. Further east, he indicated a point which he called Venice, which, however, I took the liberty of doubting; at all events, it showed but as a black speck on the indistinctly seen shores of the Adriatic, while cities without number dotted the intervening plain. In the distance, we had next the Alps of the Tyrol and of Carinthia; and nearer us, the huge mountain group of St. Gothard, the Alps of Glaciers, and the Glaciers of Alitsch; the lofty pyramids of the towering Bernese Alps, the Jungfrau, the Gemmi, the Schuckhorn, Wetterhorn, and Finster-aarhorn; and coming round again towards the south, the peak of Mont Rosa, only one hundred feet lower than that on which we stood, with the range of the Pennine Alps, and their several pinnacles, Mont Cervin, La Dent Blanche, Monts Combin and Velan. In the nearer foreground lay the Mer de Glace with its ramifications, the Jardin, and the Grand St. Bernard; on the right hand the little St. Bernard, the Allée Blanche, and the valleys of Aosta and Commayeur. Quite at our feet lay a little mound of stones, beside which ran a silver thread; this was Chamouni, with the river Arve; and stretching in front of us, I could distinctly see the whole line of the Jura, the lake of Geneva in its extent, and beyond both a large portion of France, including Lyons and the Porte du Rhone.

"I was absorbed in the contemplation of this majestic prospect," (of which, be it here remarked, Mademoiselle D'Angeville caught all the features here enumerated, with the exception of any even the remotest peep of Venice or Milan,) continues our countryman, "when Folliquet came suddenly behind me, and asked if I would not drink a glass of champagne? I joyfully assented, being half frozen with cold, and putting up my note-book (in which I had found difficulty enough, from utter weariness, in making the above entries) rejoined the company, and pledged them to the health of our mutual friends in England and Sweden. No trio, perhaps, would have more heartily enjoyed, at some thousand feet or so of less elevation, a similar panorama; but the enjoyment was almost out of the question, so much did we all suffer from exhaustion, excessive pinching cold, and the retrospect of past, and anticipation of coming dangers. With the thermometer at seven degrees below zero of Reaumur, it will easily be believed that we were all satisfied with an hour and a

quarter's sojourn on the summit of the far-famed and hitherto successfully invaded Mont Blanc."

The lady again, though happily exempted from all the varieties of suffering that "flesh" had in others "been heir to" on the same spot—such as exhaustion, drowsiness, bleeding at the nose, blindness, or difficulty of breathing,—felt even her sketching powers overcome by a cold, exceeding by one degree of Reaumur (her ascent was ten days later in the season) that experienced by the gentlemen, and found fifty minutes on the summit quite enough. "The meteorological influence of the elevation she had reached," adds her sly biographer, "still so far prevailed as to allow her to abridge, in a great measure, the toils of her descent, by sliding down the inclined planes of snow in the manner termed 'ramasser,' in which the traveller seated, as if in a sledge, behind the steering guide, who takes hold of him by the feet, is dragged in an incredibly short time over ground, the ascent of which cost them both hours of labour and fatigue. Not half an hour had elapsed since Mademoiselle D'Angeville left the summit, when the mountain wrapped its majestic head in a veil of impenetrable clouds, which for eight following days it perseveringly kept on; a phenomenon, which the residents at Chamouni, whose plans it sadly disconcerted, interpreted—according as gallantry or disappointment dictated—into grief for the departure of its first lady visitor, or vexation at the disenchantment, by her unvarnished narration, of many of its vague and mysterious terms. Be this as it may, it was long ere the spirit of the mountain recovered his good humour."

We need not follow in detail the descent of either party—though that of the gentleman, rather ominously preceded by a violent gust of wind whirling our young friend's hat down a precipice, where, considering that the whole summit is but a space of a few feet, the owner might have very easily followed it, seems to have again presented more difficulties than occurred in that of the conquering heroine; chiefly from the enlargement by the noon-day heat of the several crevices, from being engulfed by one of which Mr. Atkins was only saved by the presence of mind of his invaluable guide. In one respect only the male party proved and asserted their superior prowess—for they proceeded without halting for the night at the Grands Mulets, which the fatigue of the lady rendered necessary—the same evening to Chamouni. They were destined, however, to be still in some degree shamed by female courage and enterprise; as at Pierre Pointue, a spot more easy of access, it might be thought, for goats than mountain maidens, an agreeable contrast to all the previous horrors of the journey presented itself in the shape of one of the latter, (the daughter of one of three guides,) who stood awaiting them with the welcome refreshment of fresh bread, milk, and honey. Over these our young friend seems to have lingered longer than suited the impatience of his married comrade and some others of the party to rejoin their anxious families. They therefore pushed on, leaving him with three guides, to finish at leisure the remainder of a pilgrimage inexpressibly cheering to him, he adds, after long wandering in the regions of storm and perils and horrors, by the sight first of chalets, at whose doors stood neatly-clad relations of the guides, assembled to

welcome and congratulate them, and then of herds and flocks, green meadows and cheerful dwellings, and all the charms of rural and pastoral life.

At the foot of the last descent he encountered the pleasing vision of a young lady on horseback, (attended by her brother on foot,) who, on meeting this wearied traveller, sprang courteously from her steed and pressed it upon him; an offer of which he was too young a soldier to avail himself. Not so, however, his trusty conductor Folliquet, who, on the offer being extended to him, jumped at once and *sans cérémonie* into the saddle, to the secret envy and regret of his more polished master. He was, however, almost immediately consoled, and compensated for his gallantry, by an envoy from his host of the "Crown," leading for his use the best mule in his stables, decked up for the occasion with flowers. In this triumphal guise, he made his entry, alongside of the courteous damsel, into Chamouni, the street of which was nearly blocked up by crowds of his own countrymen, and of natives, all heartily congratulating him on being the youngest traveller by whom the ascent of Mont Blanc had ever been attempted or achieved.

The return of the first lady from a similar expedition, it may easily be supposed, was hailed with yet louder and more general demonstrations of interest; and any one aware how essential is noise to such manifestations with the good Swiss and Savoyards, will be at no loss to imagine the popping of fire-arms and din of discordant music which signalized her triumphal entry; or her welcome as she resumed her seat at the *table d'hôte* of the Hôtel de l'Union.

Next day, however, it was her more welcome duty to preside at the customary feast given by her to her faithful guides; when she had for an interesting *vis-à-vis*, at the opposite side of the table, her sole female rival, the once fair and blooming *Marie du Mont Blanc*, who, albeit no longer either, was yet hale and hearty, and under the influence of a cheerful glass gave full tokens of unextinguished spirit. Mademoiselle D'Angeville did the honours with the usual grace of her countrywomen, and returned in a few days to Geneva, where she gave notice of an intended publication, with accompanying sketches, of the interesting narrative, whose most striking features have been anticipated in the foregoing pages.

It may not be amiss to wind up this mingled "yarn" of two successful ascents of Mont Blanc, with the verdict (pronounced too amid all the excitement of recent triumph, by a very juvenile moralist) of our countryman, as to their future inutility and very questionable character. Further advantages to science, or discoveries in geography, have been long out of the question; the charms of novelty and enterprise have well-nigh waned from an expedition in which more than one hundred men and two women have now participated; and it remains for the conscientious consideration of the wealthy and curious traveller, whether such considerable sums (the two adventures narrated having cost each of them near fifteen hundred franks) might not be more advantageously expended than in idly endangering his own life, or, if himself unconnected by ties which make it criminally selfish, in inducing half a dozen fathers of families, dependent on them

for very existence, to share, perhaps, the fate of the three unfortunate guides above alluded to, who perished when accompanying the Russian Dr. Hanmel; a catastrophe indelibly impressed on the memory of the compiler of these pages, from having actually signed the recommendations (eagerly coveted by the juniors of the expedition) of more than one of the devoted sufferers—and not only having seen the departure in high spirits of the doomed party from Chamouni, but traced their progress with a telescope from Sallanche to within a few yards of the scene of their fatal disaster, which, but for the accidental, or rather merciful, withdrawal of his eye from the glass, it would have been his heart-rending lot to witness, without being able to discriminate, from a distance of fully twenty miles, whether its victims were the faithful men who had so lately proved his own trusty escorts, or the exulting and unconscious travellers (two of them his own countrymen) with whom he had the previous evening made light of the perils of the adventure—and who, but for providential change of position in the file, would not themselves have survived, sadly to renounce, and for ever to deplore, their luckless expedition.

THE BRIDE.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

SHE is dress'd, she is ready—the orange-wreath now
Is entwining her beautiful maidenly brow;
And its white blossoms blend with her dark raven hair,
And her cheek is as pale—but a blush late was there.
Her young sisters are busy, her mother is still,
And her eyes the crush'd tears of affection distill,
As she looks on the treasure now leaving her heart;—
O! she never had dreamt 'twas such sadness to part!

He comes! with the light eager step love only lends,
O'er his heart's worshipp'd idol enamour'd he bends;
But the sob of her mother arrested his bliss;
And pity for her woe damp'd his first nuptial kiss.
He exclaim'd, "O my mother! fear nought for thy child,
She shall smile when a bride, as her infancy smiled;
For no sorrow shall reach her when safe on my breast:
Then, thou bird of my bosom, come home to thy nest!"

DEAF UNCLE JEFFERY AND THE LITTLE OLD MAID.

BY ABBOTT LEE.

NEVER was such a commotion known in the annals of domestic mopery and broomery and scrubbery and dustery. All good housewives know how to turn a house upside down, and how to throw it out of the windows, and the dwelling into which we are about to introduce our readers was just in this agreeable predicament. The curtains were down and the carpets were up; the fires were out and the sweeps were in; the floors were wet and the cisterns were dry; everything was out of its place in the endeavour to put everything into it; and the whole household was in disorder whilst being put in order;—and all because an old uncle was coming.

All the little and the great Pokenhams were mustered, and marshalled, and drilled. Mrs. Pokenham took upon herself the office of drill-serjeant.

“Now, girls, no quarrelling, no contradiction, no huffing, no scowling, no scuffling—your old uncle’s coming. Now, boys, no fighting, and rollicking, and game-making—mind and put the best side out, and behave decently—your old uncle’s coming. And now, where’s Fanny Carr? She’s always out of the way when she ought to be in it, and in it when she ought to be out of it. Can’t any of you find me Fanny Carr? I want to give her some hints and orders, because my old uncle’s coming.”

A little plain undersized old maid, somewhere about four feet four inches and a half in height, about six stone six pounds six ounces in weight, and a complexion something between saffron and stone-blue, and dressed in a garb of forgotten date, was presently poked out of a corner by the young Pokenhams.

“Fanny Carr,” said Mrs. Pokenham, “have you done those few trifling things that I desired? Have you seen fresh linen put upon the best bed?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“And have you cured the chimney-board of rattling?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“And the windows of shaking?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“And did you see that the boot-jack and the slippers were placed ready to his feet?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“And Mr. Pokenham’s last new dressing-gown to his hands?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“And did you see that the coffee was properly cleared?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“And the chicken and bottle of wine all ready to be brought up?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“You know my uncle’s coming?”

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"Has anybody told anybody that my uncle's coming?" asked Mrs Pokenham.

"Not a soul of us!" exclaimed *omnes*.

"That's right. Why, if it were once known, we should have all the world and his wife here in less than no time. The Scudamores would be racketting and rollicking here, and Christopher and Kate mincing, and carneying, and blarneying, and they'd try with a witness to get my old uncle from me."

"They'd get a troublesome customer," said Miss Pokenham the first.

"Yes, but one that I hope will pay well. Now, girls, if you dare to show any of your quizzings, and huffings, and black looks, you'll spoil all, and we shall lose all my old uncle's share in the Bank of England. As for you, Jane, if you fall into that old trick you have got of turning up your nose at everybody—and you, Margaret, of curling up your lip at everything—and you, boys, of badgering, and bantering, and worrying, why, we shall just be throwing away all uncle Jeff's Bank-stock and landed estates; and we may as well have them, for we have as much right to them as anybody else."

"I wish you may get them," said Master Daniel.

"Most rare Daniel!" said Master Humphrey; "I wish I may."

Thanks to the little sister of the primitive old maids, Fanny Carr, everything was at length in perfect readiness; the carpets were all down, and the curtains all up; the floors were dry, and the fires were lit; the covers were stripped from the best chairs, the sofa wheeled to the best place, the fire was blazing in all the beauty of concavity, convexity, and contiguity, and every face arranged so as to look delighted at the arrival of tiresome, troublesome, cross, snappish old uncle Jeff. There came a sound of very brilliant blowing of horns; everybody strained their eyes; the Royal Blue flew past in grand style, the horses prancing and capering, and the guard making melody with a bugle horn; on it whirled and whirled, never stopping for anybody, and of course no uncle Jeff could be there, and so two tedious hours were spent in fidgetings and guessings; and then the slow coach was heard coming lumbering and trailing along, and it stopped at the steps of the respectable house where had been all the dusting and mopping and brushing and brooming, and a great masculine head, with thick heavy features, and bushy eye-brows, and large lips, poked itself out of the window, and looked up to the house in question, surveying its well hearth-stoned step, and its clean windows, and the scarlet moreen curtains through them, and the brighter blaze of the cheerful fire glowing and flickering over the window-frames, with a most morose unpleasable look; whereupon Mrs. Pokenham, and all the tribe of Pokenhams, little and big, rushed out of the parlour into the hall, and out of the hall on to the door-steps, and Mrs. Pokenham began to delight her own benevolent heart by assuring herself and her uncle, and congratulating herself upon the information, that her dear, kind, good uncle Jeffery was really looking full twenty years younger than when she last saw him.

"Dear uncle Jeffery! how kind of you to come and see us! how delighted I am to receive you into the bosom of my affectionate family! My dear Mr. Pokenham will be as rejoiced to find you amongst us, and all my darling children have been so anxious to welcome you, that they could neither eat, drink, nor sleep, for thinking and talking about you. But pray take care of the steps—they are so slanting, and slippery, and dangerous—not that you are in the least infirm, but I myself had an awkward slip from them one day. Why, how well you are looking! you must be growing younger every day. I declare you look more juvenile than any of us. Daniel—Humphrey—call the servant to take your uncle's luggage. My dear uncle, I cannot think of such a thing as your carrying your own luggage. Daniel! Humphrey! call somebody. There, can't you take it yourselves? My dear uncle Jeffery, pray wait till a servant can come. Daniel! Humphrey! why don't you move?"

Daniel and Humphrey stood with their hands in their pockets staring very contemptuously as the cross-grained old gentleman took up a small hair trunk and a leather hat-box in his hands, and, under the running cannonade of Mrs. Pokenham's speech, proceeded to ascend the flight of steps, taking as little notice of the lady proprietress of the mansion as though he had heard her not, which supposititious case appeared to be pretty nearly the true one, as on their entrance into the parlour the morose old gentleman, laying his luggage very deliberately on the floor, proceeded to draw from the depths of his capacious pocket a very serious-looking ear-horn, which having adjusted to his ear, he turned a sour look upon Mrs. Pokenham, and for the first time opened his lips.

"Well, ma'am, I told you I'd come some time or other, and I'm here."

Had all Mrs. Pokenham's energy and eloquence gone for nothing? Had it all been wasted on a deaf old man, who had not been able to hear a syllable of her mellifluous accents? was it all to do over again, and that too to the detriment of her lungs, at the top of her breath? Yes, seemingly so, and accordingly the poor hard-worked lady began again shouting as loud as possible.

"My dear uncle Jeffery, we are all delighted to see you, and looking so well—younger than ever."

"Hey? what?"

"We are all so glad to see you! You are looking so well!" shouted Mrs. Pokenham, growing very red in the face.

"Do you think I look well then?" said the cross old gentleman.

"O charmingly. Twenty years younger than when I last saw you."

"Hey? what?"

"You are looking so much younger than you did some time back. Nobody would believe that you were the same person. I am sorry, however, to see that you are rather dull of hearing."

"Dull of what?" asked uncle Jeff.

"A little deaf," shouted Mrs. Pokenham.

"Deaf! who says that I'm deaf? a set of stupid people. I should like to know who told you I was deaf! a parcel of ignorant people!"

"O, I see, I see that it was all a mistake! only I thought that perhaps you had got a little cold—nothing more, nothing more," shouted Mrs. Pokenham.

"I'm no more deaf than you are!" said the sour-visaged gentleman.

"No, no, uncle, I see that you are not. I don't know what I could be thinking of," said poor Mrs. Pokenham, whose lungs began to complain at being put into such severe requisition. "But now, uncle, take the easy chair—it is such an easy one—we got it on purpose for you."

"I don't want your easy chairs! any chair is easy to a healthy man like me. What! I suppose you think I am getting old?"

"O no, dear uncle Jeffery; you look full twenty years younger than when I saw you last. Here, Fanny Carr, do take these slippers and this dressing-gown away. I don't know who could have thought of treating my dear uncle Jeffery as if he were old or invalided. Pray, Fanny Carr, do move this footstool, and wheel this great unwieldy chair away."

The little old maid drew near much as if she had been a little mouse approaching a lion, and proceeded to do as she was bid with one of the most frightened airs in the world. The great cross man looked down like a colossal statue on the diminutive little thing who was thus called upon to wait upon his high mightiness.

"Won't you go near the fire, uncle Jeffery? it was made on purpose for you: we thought you might be cold," shouted Mrs. Pokenham.

"Cold!" sneered uncle Jeff, unbuttoning his coat.

"Do open the window, Fanny Carr, my uncle Jeffery will be suffocated."

"I wish you'd let the window be—and me too," growled uncle Jeff.

"And now, uncle Jeffery, will you take tea or coffee? we have them both ready."

"Do you think I'm a tee-totaller? I hate slops!"

"Uncle Jeffery shall have a rump-steak and oyster sauce. Would you like that?" shrieked Mrs. Pokenham.

"I don't like to be plagued!" growled uncle Jeff.

Poor Mrs. Pokenham sat down in her chair, pretty considerably exhausted with shouting, and proceeded to lament herself and console herself in a low voice, perfectly comfortable in uncle Jeff not being able to hear her, in spite of his assurances that he was by no manner of means deaf.

"Well, and so he's deaf! deaf as a door-nail! and how in the world I am to go on making myself agreeable I don't know—I shall soon be perfectly exhausted. And yet there is one little comfort in it—we need not be so very particular what we say. One may be able to express our sentiments, without being constantly in danger of stumbling over some affront or another."

"Mamma," said Miss Pokenham the eldest, "I suppose we may speak, too, as uncle Jeff is too deaf to hear a word that we can say."

"Say what you will, only don't look towards him, lest he suspect that we are speaking of him."

"I was only going to give you my opinion of this new relation of ours; why, mamma, he is amazingly ugly."

"What of that?" said Mrs. Pokenham, "he is as rich as a Jew."

"Did you ever see such thick lips—such a thick nose—and such a thick head?" said Miss Pokenham the second.

"Don't make me laugh," said Miss Pokenham the first, "or else our deaf uncle Jeff will think I am laughing at him."

"What are you talking about?" asked uncle Jeff, placing his ear-horn ready for the answer.

"They were talking, girl-like, uncle Jeffery," shouted poor Mrs. Pokenham, "of you. You know that is so natural; and they were saying—but you must excuse them—what a fine-looking man you are!"

"La, ma, how can you say so? I never saw anybody much uglier in my life, and then for expression! why he could certainly make vinegar with a look."

"Hey? what?" said uncle Jeff.

"Margaret was only saying that you have such a powerful expression. *Now, boys, if you begin to titter, I'll turn you out of the room.*"

"How mamma is sweetening up deaf uncle Jeff! Mamma, I had better help you to a little more, since it answers so well. Look how he is staring at us with his goggle eyes."

"Hey? what?" asked uncle Jeffery, turning again to Mrs. Pokenham.

"Jane was only saying, that you had such peculiarly fine eyes. *Girls, will you have done!*"

"No, mamma, it is too good fun—we must have a little more of it. Don't you see how deaf uncle Jeff is looking at us, and how red he is getting in the face? His complexion and visage would do very well for a sign-post at some village inn."

"Hey? what?" interrogated uncle Jeff.

"Margaret was observing how fresh-complexioned you are, uncle Jeffery, and what a fine portrait you would make. *Humphrey, go out of the room. Daniel, be quiet. Girls! girls! how dare you say such things before his face? I declare I sit in fear and trembling.*"

"La, mamma, one may say what one likes—it's all safe enough. Uncle Jeff is too deaf to hear, never fear. Besides, it does him good to hear you interpret for us. You turn our sour into sweet, and he seems to like the flavour. Better give him a little more."

"Feeding time is not over. Give him a little more," said Humphrey.

"How can I keep my countenance, if you go on so? Boys, be quiet."

"It is so amusing to see ma obliged to look pleasant when she is in such a passion. Dear ma, would not you like to box our ears?"

"Hey? what?" said uncle Jeff.

"The girls were saying, that they never saw me look half so delighted as I am now doing, for the pleasure of seeing you here. *Girls, if you will provoke me—boys, I will punish you for this! You are behaving shamefully!*"

"O, mamma, it is so amusing to see you trying to look sweet and

calm and pleasant at cross deaf uncle Jeff, and yet all the while in such a passion with us."

"I'll tell you what has just come into my head, mamma," said Miss Pokenham the first, "now don't let anybody laugh—have you all got your listening faces ready? are they all screwed up not to laugh?"

"Hold your tongue, Jane!" said Mrs. Pokenham.

"Ready! ready!" exclaimed *omnes*.

"Why, this is my project," resumed Miss Pokenham; "to make up a match between our little minikin finikin Fanny Carr and our great deaf uncle Jeff."

Mrs. Pokenham half screamed with fear—the rest laughed outright.

"Mamma, they would be such a nice couple. Our deaf uncle Jeff, and little minikin finikin Fanny Carr. Such an overgrown giant and such an undergrown doll. It's of no use blushing so, Fanny Carr—you make uncle Jeff look at you, your face is so on fire. He'll wonder what in the world you are blushing so about. Don't you see how he is staring?"

Little Fanny Carr lifted up her eyes and saw those of their formidable visitor fixed full upon her face, whereupon she rose from her seat and got out of the room as quickly as possible.

"Pray who is that little thing?" asked uncle Jeffery of Mrs. Pokenham, as they were left together in the evening—"pray who is that little thing who has just gone out of the room?"

"Do you mean Fanny Carr? O, she is a little creature that has seen better days, and we let her be here because my feelings won't let me send her away. She is so happy, and so attached to us, poor thing, and she just makes herself useful by doing any trifle that falls in her way. She keeps the keys of the store-room, and the tea-caddy, and the wine cellar, and the beer, and the cellaret, and she fills up her time with sewing for the girls, and she has the care of the linen, and she makes all the pastry, and does the preserves—but what I most prize Fanny Carr for is, that she is such a good nurse—she nursed the children through all their maladies, and never left them when we had the scarlet fever; everybody said that she would catch it, but she never did, though she was with them day and night. Yes, Fanny Carr is a most excellent nurse."

"So she is your housekeeper, and your cook, and your plain-sewer, and your nurse!"

"O no, uncle, I don't give her any wages."

"A servant without wages?"

"Uncle, I see that you don't like to have Fanny Carr sitting at the same table with you. I am sure I beg your pardon, but I did not think of it. I don't much think that she would like to eat with the servants, but I'll see. At all events, I can send her her dinner up to her own room."

"Let the little thing stay," said uncle Jeff.

"But, my dear uncle, I confess it was very thoughtless of me to seat her at the same table with you, and I can very well make her go."

"Then I shall go too!" said deaf uncle Jeff.

Mrs. Pokenham of course immediately withdrew her proffer. She could only regret that she had been so inadvertent as to place her highly-respectable, and highly-endowed, and fortunately rich uncle Jeffery, at the same table with a poor little minikin finikin old maid. Fanny Carr was still tolerated, and uncle Jeffery seemed so far to overcome his aversion to her as to permit various little offices which she was constantly performing for him in her character of general usefulness. She arranged the cushions in his easy chair—for, after the first fit of sullenness, uncle Jeffery permitted himself to be installed into its comfortableness—she fetched him his slippers, and reached him his footstool, and got him the newspapers, and handed him his hat and his stick when he went out, and took them from him when he came in, and always met him with a smile; and, some way or another, deaf uncle Jeff could hear Fanny Carr's gentle voice almost without the help of his ear-horn, better than he could understand other people with it.

"I wish I had deaf uncle Jeff's money!" said Master Daniel. "How I would make it fly! He has not the heart to do anything with it but keep it to get moth-eaten and rusty."

"There he is under the window," said Humphrey.

"No matter what one says, he can't hear us. It is such fun to look him in the face and hoax him—telling him what an old curmudgeon he is, and all the while making him think that you are paying the greatest compliments. Mamma does that in fine style. Now I'll show you her honey, milk, and sugar way."

And so saying, Master Daniel walked up to his deaf uncle Jeff, and, with an insinuating look and a soft smile, said, "It gives me the greatest pleasure to assure you that I think you have not sense enough to enjoy either your life or your money."

"Hey? What do you say?" said deaf uncle Jeff, applying his ear-horn.

"O fie!" exclaimed the little old maid, turning very red—"how can you mock his infirmities in that manner!"

"I'll tell you what," said Master Daniel, turning sharply round upon the poor dependent—"I'll tell you what—mamma ordered you to make the amiable to old deaf uncle Jeff here for our sake, but she begins to think you are doing it for your own."

"O Master Daniel!" exclaimed little Fanny Carr, "you know that I try to be kind to everybody—indeed I ought, for I feel what it is to wish for kindness myself; and when I see how you all play upon this poor gentleman, because he happens to be deaf, I can't help feeling the more pitiful over him; but it would be just the same if he were poor."

"Hey? hey? What does she say?" asked uncle Jeffery.

"She says that she is quite exhausted with the trouble of speaking to you, sir, you are so very deaf."

"Deaf! deaf!" exclaimed the old gentleman—"I am not deaf—I told you all before that I was not deaf."

"O Daniel!" exclaimed Fanny Carr, with the tears in her eyes—"how can you so misrepresent me?"

"Hey? hey? What does she say?" asked uncle Jeffery.

"She says, sir, that she is quite worn out with the trouble of shouting and running errands."

"O Daniel!" ejaculated the little old maid.

"And she says that if you don't go away very soon, she must. But mamma is very angry with her for grumbling, and I shouldn't wonder if she were to show her the way to the door."

The little old maid burst into tears.

"Hey? hey? What's all this?" ejaculated the deaf gentleman.

"O mamma, you are here, and it's high time," said Master Daniel, as Mrs. Pokenham entered. "If I had not been here to meddle, Fanny Carr was managing deaf uncle Jeff in fine style."

"Fanny Carr," said Mrs. Pokenham, "your conduct has been more and more extraordinary every day."

"What have I done?" exclaimed the little old maid.

"You have been trying to manage my poor silly uncle—that has been plain enough in my eyes for a long time. You tattle after him, and go about fetching, and carrying, and coaxing, and looking like a lamb, and you know that you have your own private ends in it all."

"What ends can I have?" exclaimed Fanny.

"Why, Miss Carr, if I must speak the plain truth—and I am a plain-spoken person, you know, not much given to flattery—I must say, that I see clearly enough what you are aiming at. When one party is foolish, and the other is artful, it does not need much discernment to see what is in the wind."

"What do you mean, ma'am?" exclaimed the little old maid in an agony.

"Why, I mean, Miss Carr, just this;—you see that my uncle is a silly old man, and rich, and you being clever and poor, you think that you may be able to catch him in a match. You think that it would be a better thing to be Mrs. Jeffery, and keep your carriage, than even to live the idle life which you are now doing."

"The idle life which I now lead!" exclaimed the little old maid. "I, who toil in labours which have no end through all the weary days, without either thanks or wages!—and now to be accused of this!"

"You see that my uncle is half a fool, and you think that you can juggle him into marrying you. But I tell you once more that I will not stand by and see such things done in my house; so just have the goodness to tie up your things, and take your departure in half an hour—and very glad shall I be when you are fairly gone, for I see how artful you are, and there is no knowing where the mischief may end."

Fanny Carr burst into an agony of tears.

"Mr. Jeffery is not the weak man you think him, but clear-headed and strong-minded enough to detect me, if I were the artful creature you accuse me of being. But I will go. I will not stay to be accused

of eating the bread of idleness, or practising subterfuges—no, I will go and beg my bread rather than that!—anything is better than that;—only—only—don't laugh at him any more, poor gentleman, for if he were to find it out he would feel it, for he is not so simple as you think him, dear, poor gentleman."

"Hey? hey? what does she say?" asked uncle Jeff.

"O, my dear uncle Jeffery, don't mind her. She is an ungrateful creature, after all the kindness which we have shown her, to be weary of paying you the few little attentions which I had enjoined upon her. But, my dear uncle, I have sent her away. Nobody shall slight you in my house, so I have sent her away."

"Humph!" said deaf uncle Jeff.

The little old maid's eyes were almost drowned with tears—and, whatever poets may say in rhyme on the superlativeness of the beauty of bloodshot orbs, and their red curtains, and all that, we have always been accustomed to consider those sort of things amazingly unbecoming. But it happened that our little heroine forgot to consult her looking-glass upon the occasion, and consequently her eyes became something like the red sea. The poor little body, however, proceeded as expeditiously as might be to lay her scanty wardrobe as straightly as possible in a wooden box, which was both small enough and large enough; to collect her needles and her knitting; a few letters, carefully tied up with a piece of faded blue ribbon, the dates of which proved chronologically that the paper had been made full twenty years ago, all of them written in a neat masculine hand, like that of a school usher, and dated as many years back; to look very particularly at and sigh over a little morsel of sandy hair; to stroke her favourite pussy for the last time; and then to take her clogs, her reticule, and her umbrella; to look at an old summer-house; to gather two or three leaves from an old tree; and then to pass through those inhospitable doors into the wide, wide, bleak and cold world, alone—alone.

There are some hearts like some vegetables—they take root anywhere, no matter how unfavourable the soil, or how blighting the atmosphere. Thus it was with the little old maid. In spite of derision, and scorn, and buffeting, her feelings had grown to the inanimate stone walls that surrounded her, simply because they had nothing else to cling to;—and if the mere impulses of a loving nature could thus attach her to repelling and repulsive objects, how tenderly might she have loved what was really loveable!

Poor Fanny Carr, with the liberal, large, and inexhaustible sum of somewhere about five shillings in her pocket, looked mentally round for a shelter for her head, and having bethought herself of one of Mrs. Pokenham's discarded servants, who had married and settled, determined upon seeking shelter there.

In a little cottage by the road-side, as clean as those dear cottages of England ever are, with a neatly-trimmed garden without, luxuriant in summer blossomings, and with the whitest of white curtains within, and the reddest of red floors, and the brightest of round tables, and the most resplendent of fire-places, sat the little old maid, dressed as

neatly as if fairy hands had been her tirewomen, and working at her needle as blithely as birds perform their daily task of singing. What though her five shillings was very nearly exhausted, she could earn almost sixpence a day, and that was independence, and independence was happiness,

There came a great dust whilst the little old maid was thus delving for happiness and sixpence a day, and a noise of carriage-wheels; and looking up to see what might be coming, she saw a plain, respectable, grave, steady, brown-visaged carriage and pair, with a coachman in a brown livery before, and a servant in a brown livery seated in the box behind, and lo and behold, it stopped at the very cottage-door where she was working; and so the little old maid jumped up, and threw down her cotton and her scissors, and hastened to tell them that it was all a mistake, when, to her particular astonishment, she saw deaf uncle Jeffery getting down the steps, and walking across the cottage garden, and coming in at the door. And having gone thus far, the deaf gentleman took hold of her diminutive hand in his great gigantic paw, and gave it a squeeze, which almost made the little old maid cry out, which, however, she did not do, for ladies of all sizes very seldom cry out at a squeeze of the hand, generally bearing that sort of pain very philosophically, and then uncle Jeffery proceeded to draw one of the brightly-rubbed wooden-bottom chairs to himself, for his own particular use, and to sit down upon it close to the little old maid

"I hope you are well, Mr. Jeffery," shouted the little old maid; "it is very kind of you to come and see me. I hope you are well."

"Quite well, thank you," replied uncle Jeffery, "and now tell me what you think has brought me to see you?"

"Perhaps," said the little old maid, colouring slightly with the remains of a well-whipped, well-worn-down, well-subdued pride, "perhaps you wanted me to do some plain work for you, Mr. Jeffery. I am taking in plain work."

"You need not speak so loud, my dear," said deaf uncle Jeff; "you know you will tire yourself, you will exhaust yourself."

"O, Mr. Jeffery!" said the little old maid, the tears rushing into her eyes, "O, Mr. Jeffery, pray believe that I never complained, or never even felt it a trouble to talk to you. Indeed, I did not! I don't know how soon I may be afflicted myself."

Uncle Jeffery took poor Fanny's hand, and gave it another squeeze that almost threatened it with compression. "I know you did not. Yet nevertheless you must not speak so loud."

"But you have not your ear-horn," said Fanny Carr, persisting in shouting, lest her visitor should think that she grudged the trouble; "but you have not your ear-horn."

"But you know that I always told you that I was not deaf."

The little old maid looked perplexed.

"But you never believed me—was that it?"

The little old maid coloured crimson, but she could not deny it.

"Well then, if I were deaf, I am better."

"I am glad of it, with all my heart," said the little old maid, "for it must be a miserable thing not to hear a word that is said to us."

"Yet sometimes it is better not to hear what is said of us," replied uncle Jeffery."

The little old maid coloured deeply. She remembered too well all that had been said of him and before him.

"But do you know that I had, even when I was at the worst, quite hearing enough to know how kind you were to me, and how amiable to everybody else."

"O, you are too good to think so," said the little old maid with a blush.

"And now tell me your plans, and if there is anything I can help you in, and really you need not speak so loud. You know I could always understand *you* even when I was very hard of hearing. Now tell me your plans."

"O," said the little old maid, "they are soon told. The people who live here were Mrs. Pokenham's servants, and they are very kind to me, and I have got plenty of work, and I am quite happy and contented. Only if you want any shirts making——"

"I certainly would not let you do them."

"O!" exclaimed poor Fanny Carr.

"No, that I would not; for your gentleness, your kindness, your simplicity, your disinterestedness of character, deserve something better. Now you have told me your plans, shall I tell you mine?"

"Yes, if you please," said the little old maid.

"Well, then, to begin with myself," said uncle Jeffery, "I have a few thousands a year, I have a carriage and horses, and servants, and a very good house, and gardens and orchards, and pleasure-grounds; and I believe that all my own county consider me rather a respectable man."

Fanny Carr got up and curtsied.

"But yet I have the character of being a severe and sarcastic and morose man."

"O no, that you are not!" warmly interrupted the little old maid.

"I am glad that you do not think so. Well, I have one want in my house. Can you guess what it is?"

Fanny looked puzzled. "Money will buy everything."

"Not the thing that I want."

"Then it must be something very particular indeed."

"It is something very particular indeed."

"O, I'll help you to find it."

"That is very kind, and I hope you will—I want—something to love."

"The world is full of such things," said the little old maid.

"To you who love everything from the overflowing of your heart, but not to me."

Poor Fanny looked infinitely perplexed. "I wish I could do anything to help you."

"You can. I told you I had a carriage and servants, and house and furniture, and plate and money, but I have no one to share them with me; no one to ride with me, sit with me, walk with me, talk

with me, take the head of my table—to love me if they could. In short I want a wife. Will you take this troublesome office?"

"O Mr. Jeffery!" exclaimed Fanny Carr, with a face as red as *as* blushes could make it.

The plain brown chariot with the brown horses and brown hammer-cloth, and the servants in brown liveries, drew up with a great dash, quite in an unusual manner, at Mr. Pokenham's door. It was very evident that everything belonging to the brown affair was in a considerable state of excitement, in fact quite in a brown fever or sort of effervescence, and some way or another the agitation was communicated to the family of the Pokenhams within.

"Who can it be!" exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham. "Don't bring them in here, but show them into the drawing-room. I always like to receive carriage people in the drawing-room; and, Jane, fetch me a clean pair of gloves."

"La, mamma, a wedding! look at the white favours!" exclaimed Miss Pokenham the first.

"Then there's one chance less in the world," said Miss Pokenham the second.

"It's all right," said Master Daniel, "I like bridecake, and I don't care how many people marry and are miserable, so that I get a good feast by it."

"I like the quarrelling quite as well as the cake," said Master Humphrey.

"Look!" exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham, "I declare if it is not deaf uncle Jeff! I thought he'd be glad to come back to us; I made him so very comfortable with his chickens and easy chairs, that I thought he'd soon want to be back again, if that little deceitful Fanny Carr had not poisoned his mind."

"He's a good customer," said Master Dan.

"Mamma's legacy will keep well: it will be fine high game," said Master Humphrey.

"How smart uncle Jeff is!" said Miss Pokenham the first.

"White silks and pumps, I declare, and a flower in his button-hole!"

"And what on earth is that little lump of finery behind him?" said Miss Pokenham the second.

"Why, goodness gracious! you don't think that uncle Jeff has been such an old stupid as to get married himself!" said Miss Pokenham the first.

"I shall faint at the bare supposition," exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham—"an unnatural monster!"

"Here he comes, and his queen doll with him."

Uncle Jeffery walked into the room as stately as the tallest grenadier in the service of Frederick the Great, dragging after him a bundle of white satin and white lace and French blond and white kid gloves and orange blossoms, and it really was astonishing to see how many dozens of yards they had managed to tie up together.

"Is it you, uncle Jeffery?" shouted Mrs. Pokenham, of course not at all expecting an answer to her question.

"Yes, I have brought you myself and my better half."

"What do you mean, uncle Jeffery?"

"You need not speak so loud," said uncle Jeffery.

"True, true," said Mrs. Pokenham, "I had forgot that you are not at all hard of hearing."

"I am not," said uncle Jeffery.

Mrs. Pokenham stared in spite of herself.

"I always told you that I was not deaf."

"You did, of course you did."

"But you never believed me."

"O yes, that I am sure I did," shouted Mrs. Pokenham.

"Speak in a whisper as you used to do. Can't you tell each other what a fool, and a dolt, and what a piece of ugliness is cross and deaf old uncle Jeff."

"O, uncle, and can you really hear?"

"Ay, a pin fall to the ground, I always had excellent hearing."

"Yes, uncle, I know you had."

"But you don't believe it."

"O, certainly, certainly."

"Well, if some people are hard of hearing, others are hard of belief. Perhaps you won't believe me when I tell you I am married."

"Married! and to whom?"

Uncle Jeffery lifted up the veil of the bundle of white satin and pomps and vanities, and introduced "Mrs. Jeffery."

"Fanny Carr!" exclaimed the whole congregation.

"Wretch of a man!" exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham. "Is it thus you come to wound our feelings!"

"And to make you what I hope you will consider a handsome present."

"How liberal! how kind!" exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham, her hopes reviving.

"Yes, indeed, I have brought you my ear-horn tied with white ribbon, and I hope you will keep it hung up here in the drawing-room, to remind you of cross, deaf, old uncle Jeff."

LOVE AND FAME;

OR, A NEW TRAGEDY AT THE HAYMARKET.

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D. D.

" Vien dietro a me e lascia dir le genti
Sta fermo come torre che non crolla
Giammai sua cima per soffiare de' senti."—DANIE.

" Ay, there he rests with his fathers," said the vicar, as they moved slowly away. " Seymour, we have all lost our best friend."

Then there was a dead pause. The grave gentleman stepped carefully along the alleys, avoiding, with a veneration rare among churchmen, to tread on the grassy mounds that hid the relics of mortality. His daughter hung still on his arm, and as she followed him with some difficulty, owing to the narrowness of the path, her downcast eyes were, perhaps involuntarily, turned towards their younger companion.

Between young Seymour and the clergyman's daughter there had long since existed a more than fraternal intimacy. But those years of unconscious happiness were far back in the past. Circumstances had so long estranged the two young persons from each other as to need the ceremony of a formal re-introduction on their meeting again.

Seymour was an orphan from childhood. His parents—his father at least—belonged by birth to that class of the British gentry, whose disinterested but undiscerning loyalty had attached them to what was once the creed of their country. He was a papist, and as such, it need scarcely be added, notwithstanding his high descent, he had lived poor and died unknown. His wife, who had renounced the luxuries of her father's home to share her husband's humble fortunes and embrace his religious opinions, had preceded him in his grave, and their only child had been thus bequeathed to the charity of the lady's brother, an officer in the royal army, and a bachelor, and was brought up at his uncle's estate in Monmouthshire, on the river Wye, not a hundred miles above Tintern.

Colonel Dearne, the uncle, though himself a good Protestant, deemed it due to his sister's memory to educate her child in the tenets of the Catholic church. Consequently young Seymour was trusted to the care of an Irish tutor and chaplain, and ere he had fully attained his fifteenth year, he was sent to an English college in Rome.

After a sojourn of seven years on the continent, he had been hastily summoned to his uncle's death-bed, to find himself, after that gentleman's decease, the sole inheritor of Dearne Park, and of all the rest of the colonel's large property.

Three months had now elapsed since the young orphan's prospects had undergone that sudden vicissitude. Seymour, who had during that long interval entirely confined himself to the solitude of his wide mansion, admitting and returning no visits but those of the best friend and neighbour of his lamented relation, the reverend Josiah Etheridge, vicar of the adjoining village, was now for the first time induced to view the family vault to which the remains of the late colonel had been consigned.

The circumstances connected with young Seymour's earliest education will easily account for what his conduct might have of exaggerated and romantic in the eyes of the worldly-minded, who would otherwise be at a loss to conceive how a fortune yielding a net income of more than ten thousand a year could fail to console the heir for the loss even of the only relation he had left in the world.

The dulness and loneliness of his uncle's country-seat, notwithstanding the loveliness of its picturesque neighbourhood, the sternness and austerity of his priestly Mentor, in spite of his ill-assumed jesuitical blandness, had moulded our young orphan's character to an habitual sadness, which the gloom of his half-cloistral education in Italy was not certainly calculated to dissipate.

Seymour had known no boyhood: and the premature development of his intellectual faculties had preyed within his soul with a dangerous activity, giving his constitution that gracility and languor, which, without materially affecting health, has at least power to damp and even utterly to extinguish the natural buoyancy and sanguineness of youth.

The death of his only relation left him, he fancied, alone and unloved in the world, and although he derived no slight comfort from his intercourse with his friends at the vicarage, still he worked himself into the belief that the interest they evinced in his behalf was only called forth by their sympathy in his recent bereavement, but that he was personally nothing to them.

Something indeed there was in the vicar's behaviour that might well justify his worst apprehensions. Mr. Etheridge was a man naturally of reserved and rigid manners, and although zealously attached to the church of which his eloquence had made him in his youth one of the greatest ornaments, yet so candid was his liberality, so scrupulous his delicacy and forbearance, that he was constantly on his guard lest a word should escape his lips which might be construed into a disrespectful allusion to his young friend's religious persuasion, or betray any attempt on his part as an indiscreet and uncalled-for proselytism.

This thought seemed perpetually to haunt the good clergyman, and to disturb the serenity of his mind; it spread an air of coldness and embarrassment on his conversation, to which his susceptible friend was but too apt to put the most unfavourable construction.

The mutual feelings of the two young persons towards each other were perhaps of a warmer, but still less definite nature. The awful solemnity which had brought the young orphan once more into contact with his youthful playmate, had prevented that spontaneous expansion of their yearning hearts which might have broken the ice at once, and placed them on the footing of their former acquaintance. Seymour beheld, with an admiration little short of amazement, his little Cary, with whom he was wont to romp, to roll and wrestle playfully on the lawn, now grown into one of the most stately, most elegant, most accomplished young ladies that ever graced the aristocratic circles at Almack's. Miss Etheridge had also repeatedly absented herself from her home on the banks of the Wye. Her father, who doted on her, had been prevailed upon to part with his only child

during more than one cheerless season, and invested with his parental rights Lady Paget, a distant relation of Caroline's mother, that she might, under that lady's chaperonship, receive the advantages of a fashionable education in London.

Lady Paget had produced her ward with an indiscriminate hurry; and though her natural soundness of principle, and her very levity and vanity of disposition, made the young lady proof against the flattery and seduction that awaited her from all quarters, yet that universal homage could not fail to add to the natural wildness and giddiness of the self-willed country girl, and had won her from her admirers the unenviable but not wholly undeserved appellation of "the most arrant coquette in town."

And yet that same Caroline Etheridge, who appeared so utterly and exclusively in love with her sweet self, who had resisted the most splendid offers, and even, it was bruited, spurned that, to an English commoner's daughter, most irresistible temptation, a coronet—who had blanched even the painted cheeks of long-reigning beauties with jealousy, and driven several veteran lady-killers to despair—was not perhaps as hollow-hearted as she was, or as she fain wished to be, thought; and the ineffable relief that she felt whenever the close of the London season allowed her to run back to her lonely father in Monmouthshire, the gladness and readiness with which she re-accommodated herself to the homely routine of country life, would have made people believe that her heart lay among the shady groves and the labyrinthine alleys of Dearne Park, with the dim recollections of childhood, when Harry Seymour was the sole companion of her rambles, when the dark countenance of the frowning priest broke suddenly on their juvenile frolics, as he called his truant disciple back to his task.

That Harry Seymour had now returned; and although their first interviews were, as we have seen, necessarily cold and formal, yet the vague curiosity with which the young beauty had rapidly surveyed her earliest friend, drawing her maiden-like parallel between him and her more recent acquaintance in town, awoke a tumult of confused sensations in her bosom, which every other better experienced or more disinterested observer than Seymour could not have failed to read in the flitting colour of her tale-telling countenance.

But the desponding lover, with the most deplorable ingenuity, blinded himself to his happiness; and as he sat, almost breathless, close by her side, either listening to her harp in a trance of delight, or following her fair hand as she turned leaf after leaf of her drawing-book—in proportion as he discovered new talents in his gifted charmer, he sank lower and lower in his own estimation, and, with a diffidence rare in a man of his age, and which many would think unaccountable in one of his fortune, he laboured to deprive his love of its sole and essential aliment of hope, in the same measure as that passion took a more and more steady hold of his whole being.

The sun was setting behind the hill as they issued from their shady walk in the churchyard. It was a fine eve in October, and the blessed calm of heaven, which seemed to rest on the autumn-mellowed landscape, gradually wore off the sad impressions left upon their minds by the performance of their pious duty, and their conversation assumed

a more serene and cheerful tone. They had reached the main avenue leading through the consecrated ground to the church, and Seymour had now sufficient space to resume his place on the right of the clergyman—a position which he preferred, perhaps, because he wished rather to show his reverence than his gallantry, or perhaps, also, because in this arrangement the young lady's countenance would be naturally turned towards him.

"*Non omnis moriar!*" A proud motto that of the Dearnés," observed the young lady, alluding to the cognizance of that family, which had attracted their attention as they stood absorbed in their melancholy meditations at the foot of the monument. It consisted of a lighted torch fluttering in the wind, with those ambitious Latin words engraved in rude Gothic characters underneath. "I wonder, Mr. Seymour, whether you mean to engraft your uncle's arms on your own escutcheon?"

"To tell you the truth," answered the mourner, "I have not thought a great deal about that matter. Depend upon it, however, while I live—at least while I continue the owner of Dearne Park—the armorial bearings of its ancient proprietors shall not be removed from their place."

"Of course—I thought so. But are you aware of the obligations devolving upon the inheritor of that noble ensign? *Non omnis moriar!* Why, it implies a compact with immortality."

"If so," replied Seymour, "the worthy knight, Sir Tristram Dearne, who first won that crest in the reign of Elizabeth, presumed too far on the valour of his latest posterity. You see," continued the orphan, glancing backwards with some emotion, "the colonel himself, notwithstanding his spirited conduct at Waterloo, is not likely to live long, unless it be in the memory of his only relative, and a few of his friends."

"Not so, my son," interrupted the clergyman gravely. "That motto conveys to my mind a very different meaning—it expresses a Christian belief in that life beyond life which awaits us all in another and a better world."

"But surely, papa," interrupted the young lady, clinging more fondly to her father's arm, and looking half-earnestly, half-playfully up to his face as if to implore his indulgence for having so unceremoniously cut short his sermon; "there can be no harm, I hope, in longing for fame; you would not blame your young friend, would you, if he were to take upon himself the fulfilment of the awful legacy bequeathed on his race by Sir Tristram?"

"Me, Miss Caroline!" exclaimed Henry, smiling and colouring faintly. "I confess I feel inclined to give that motto your honoured father's spiritual interpretation."

"I should be very sorry," quoth Mr. Etheridge, "if it were otherwise—sorry, at least, to see you courting fame for its own sake. Fame is, like Fortune, a wanton mistress; she smiles more kindly on those that sigh least after her."

"Perhaps so, father; but then, like Fortune, she is to be swayed by a daring heart and an unswerving will. I am sure, father, were I a man, I would be a hero!"

"So would a great many—so would almost every one of us, my dear child; so long, at least, as we are on the sunny side of thirty; but, alas! where millions set down their stakes, it is only one that carries the prize."

"But, oh!—that one, my dear father—oh, how I could love that one!"

"Silly child," cried the doting parent in a chiding tone; then, as he looked down on the beaming countenance of the lovely enthusiast, he added half whispering, while he kissed her eyes, "Heroes make but indifferent husbands."

Seymour had walked in silence, and with an averted face, whilst that brief dialogue between father and daughter was going on. He felt in his eyes that smarting sensation that the infliction of pain brings up on the eyelids of those privileged beings who are too proud to shed tears.

Golden visions of glory had, to say the truth—as it is but too often the case with men of generous nature—haunted the student amidst the day-dreams of his youth. His diffidence, or rather his pride—for nothing in the world is more common than to mistake one for the other—had afterwards shrunk from the dangerous experiment; not indeed because the "bubble reputation" danced less temptingly before him in all the luxuriancy of its prismatic colours, or because he was aware of the disenchantment that awaited him, had the floating bauble ever come to burst in his hands; but in consequence only of that despondency which now made him equally backwark and shy in his amorous suit.

That vague juvenile aspiration, however, though dormant, lay still unextinguished in his bosom, and the earnest fervour with which that romantic girl had dwelt on the value that she attached to the distinction of worldly renown, had reawakened a thousand wild fantasies, against which his reason had vainly striven to guard his susceptible imagination.

It seemed as if every word the young damsel had spoken was meant to penetrate him with a sense of his own unworthiness, and to upbraid him for his unjustifiable presumption. He felt that one so beautiful, so high-minded and gifted, was only to be captivated by a man who could lay at her feet the homage of multitudes; that he who had cowered before the difficulties besetting the threshold of the temple of immortality; who had, in sheer despair, resigned himself to obscurity, and allowed the more fortunate to forward their claims to public applause, had by that very act given up his chances as a candidate for what seemed to him the noblest reward human ambition could look forward to—the hand and heart of Caroline.

On the other hand, Caroline, with the quick apprehension of her sex, had read the secret of her lover's heart. She knew that her words fell not on unwilling ears, and was determined to use her ascendancy to rouse him to a better opinion of self.

She loved Harry Seymour. The indefinable anxiety with which she had awaited the return of her childish associate, the sympathy she felt in his unfeigned sorrow for the loss of his relative, and also—why should she not avow it?—a secret complacency at his accession to his

uncle's fortune, had given rise to a hidden thought, which recurred the more obstinately the more she was determined to banish it from her mind—that Mrs. Seymour would be, to say the least, as euphonious a name as Miss Etheridge.

She loved Harry Seymour. She loved the pale but noble and intelligent countenance, the manly bearing, the pensive mien of her enterprizing admirer. The newness and freshness of his ideas, the primitiveness of his manners, the earnestness of his unstudied conversation, the rapid and almost involuntary outburst of mighty, but as yet aimless, undefined, unacknowledged passions. She compared him with the vain and vapid and fashion-moulded *exquisites* that crowded Lady Paget's drawing-rooms in Harley Street, and she felt assured that, even in the judgment of the world, a parson's daughter might safely venture to produce the heir of Dearne Park as her affianced lover, without much dreading the charitable comments of her friends.

All this, however, could not suffice to her feminine ambition. That Caroline Etheridge, to whose eyes the most pompous names in the British Peerage had appeared unmeaning and lustreless, could not be resolved to settle in life with no other title to boast of than the wife of Henry Seymour, a country gentleman, an esquire, *comme il-y-en a tant*. She was not extravagantly vain of herself. The fine compliments with which she had been surfeited in town had no farther turned her head than to impress her with the conviction that she was "rather a pretty and a winsome girl," a notion with which every rational being, but a few of her own bosom friends, would have found it difficult to disagree; but after such a long hesitation, after three or four years of glorious flirtation, she felt the necessity of affording some consolation to her discarded suitors, by introducing into society something that might justify her uncommon pretensions. She was not, in short, vain of herself, but she wished to have reason to be proud of the man of her choice.

Her own Henry, she fancied, was precisely the man a wife could look up to. He had all of genius, except the consciousness of his own powers, and a woman's vanity, she added, could have no greater gratification than to reveal to a wavering mind the secret of its own greatness, and point out the high destinies to which it was entitled to aspire. She wished to make him great before she called him her own.

"You must have met such a one more than once," continued Seymour, "during your staying in town, and what is more, you must have had more than one of such gifted beings at your feet."

"Such a one in London!" replied the young beauty, with an accent of utter disdainfulness: then suddenly checking himself—"Heroes in London!" she added, "to be sure, I have seen the Duke of Wellington and Marshal Soult and Van Amburgh and Thalberg, and a hundred others; but," she concluded, colouring deeply, "not one who cared to be great for my sake."

"I see what it is," interposed the aged clergyman in a serious tone, "your aunt in town has been stuffing your head with earls and dukes, and you dream of nothing but coronets."

"Coronets! earls and dukes!" retorted Miss Etheridge, almost angrily; whilst the remembrance of her hundred trophies, and the ghosts of Lord Augustus Gilderoy, and Viscount Geraldine, and other victimized scions of the British nobility, rushed vividly in her sight. "My dear father, a lord in the country, among his tenants, in the eyes of his household, may be a great man; but in London, in parliament, if he be nothing but a lord, why, he is lost in the crowd of his peers. The man I could love," she cast her eyes to the ground as she spoke, "should have no peers in the world."

"But, Miss Etheridge," urged her bashful admirer "the dulness of the times must, in some degree, be called to account for the scarcity of heroes in the present generation. I hear that some of our young noblemen are trying to reproduce, in a mock-tournament, the gallant achievements of chivalrous times. If so, some chance will be left for the happy mortal whom you may allow to wear your colours."

But Seymour attempted *badinage* with an ill grace; and although Caroline had also carried on the conversation in a jesting strain, her flashing eye and animated brow revealed the existence of another and a loftier nature under the apparent levity and thoughtlessness of her manners.

"The age of chivalry is over," said she, solemnly. "Who knows it not? We are told so every day, and never hear it without regret. But be it even so! There are more roads than one to immortality. Are laurels never to be reaped but with the edge of the sword? Is not the minstrel as great as his hero? and," added the fair lady, turning abruptly, and looking full into the face of her lover, "and are you not, Henry, a poet?"

Seymour was taken by surprise. He fell back one or two steps as if caught in *flagrante delicto*, and a few seconds elapsed before he had assumed sufficient composure to answer in the same tone of affected gaiety. "A poet!" said he, "perhaps I may be, but then I don't know it."

"You know it," said Miss Etheridge, "and, what is more, we know it too. Think you, you can conceal it from your friends. O Henry," she added, reproachfully, "are you not that same Harry Seymour who ran to my father, all bathed in tears, appealing against the hard-heartedness of your tutor, who had torn your sonnets to pieces, while he pestered your head with his Latin? Don't know it? Why, ever since a child, you were a poet."

"Such a poet as I then was, I am still, dear Caroline," said Seymour in an unguarded moment; for that sudden appeal to bygone days had brought the two young friends back to the style of their former familiarity. "I plead guilty—I am a poet. Within my inmost soul, out in the fields at large, face to face with nature," and, he would have added, near you, "I confess I still believe myself a poet. You see I am alone, and not happy. I have nothing in the world to do; hence have I leisure to think—hence I muse and dream. Had I the means of seizing upon the strange, flitting fancies that haunt and weary my imagination, had I language to clothe, to embody the nameless, shapeless beings of my teeming brain, I might, perhaps, write poetry—but alas! my muse, like an owl, delights in the darkness of my benighted

understanding; it seems to dread the broad glare of daylight. I have tried, Caroline, I have never ceased to try; but after a few hours of tantalising efforts, after poring over a few lines until my poor head grows dizzy with intense application, I start up in despair, cast my half-blank page into the fire, exhausted and conquered, at war with myself, the most wretched being in existence. O Caroline, tempt me not! I heard it often repeated that poets are mad; but were I to persist in the attempt, I should be a madman ere I could be a poet. Tempt me not, speak not to me of fame. Fame! O how invitingly she seemed to smile before me! how near within my reach! how ready to fall in my embrace! but now I am cured of illusions. I have abjured the false demon for which I was ready to barter body and soul. Speak not of fame, dear Caroline, it has still a powerful hold on my imagination, but I know I could have no better chance of success in my suit than the poor lunatic I heard of in Naples, who was in love with the moon."

Yet Caroline was not discouraged. "If you want to sail up to the moon," said she, producing a folded paper which she had treasured up with great care, "here is wherewith to make you a balloon. Yes! what would you say, if one of those unlucky half-blank pages had miraculously escaped the flames to which you doom them, to fall into the hands of your friends; and what would you answer, moreover, were I to repeat all that my father, who is, you will acknowledge, a competent judge, has said about these few lines which you have wrung from your *long-tortured, sterile, benighted* imagination? Here," she continued, unfolding the scrawl, and holding it up to him, "do you recognize your handwriting? Nay, start not, frown not! No mortal ventures to intrude into the sanctuary of your muse. This precious fragment was not stolen; it was gathered from the green turf, where it lay, or rather where it flew about, the sport of the breeze, like a sibylline leaf. It was found in our orchard, by the water-side, by a nymph, in the shape of our gardener's daughter Lucy, who watched you as you threw it from you, and thought, the little vixen, that the poor outcast would fare better if trusted to the tender mercies of her mistress."

"O—ah! I see," quoth the poet, colouring; "it is only the chorus of an unfinished tragedy."

"Tragedy!" re-echoed the delighted Miss Etheridge, "you don't say so! Are you writing a tragedy?"

"I can't well say I am writing," said Seymour, "but I have often thought that I would rather attempt that than any other style of writing."

"Dear me—a tragedy! and what is the title?"

"'Vanina—Vanina d'Ornano;' but I told you it is an unfinished and a never-to-be-finished composition."

"Be not so sure of that, Mr. Seymour," interrupted Mr. Etheridge; "you do yourself great injustice. Think not that I would ever advise you to stake your peace of mind against the vain and precarious excitement of popular applause. But you are alone, you are rich and independent, you can afford to be a poet: cultivate the noble art for your own, not for the world's sake. Follow the

impulse of your genius, and dwell with the visions of your imagination. Raise yourself above the level of the petty cares and miseries of life. You do not want, you are not fit, to commune with men. There is a religion in poetry which purifies and exalts the soul of the priest that sacrifices at its altars."

"Ay, be a poet, Harry Seymour," cried Caroline; "and if not for your own, for the sake of your friends. Why stand you aloof from us? we are the only friends—the only persons you have seen these three months. Is it not strange that you should have secrets for us? Believe me, your faint-heartedness is unworthy of you. Till we have tried, we know not what we can do. Were I a man, I repeat, I would feel degraded if I thought that what another man does is impossible to me. Think you, heroes were made of different stuff from the common of mortals? No, 'tis only to their firmness of purpose, 'tis to their inexorable iron will that they owe their success. 'Tis that greatest of virtues we envy your sex—courage, that has power to come off conqueror of all obstacles, to smooth all asperities. O for an hour of that manliness that believes itself equal to the most arduous undertakings!"

Seymour replied not. By this time they had reached the solitary residence of the good vicar, a lovely cottage embosomed in a cluster of elms, which stood on the bank of the river, less than half a mile from the church. They had stopped before the steps of the threshold, and the fair Caroline, carried away by her transport, had relinquished her father's arm to give force to her arguments by the prestige of action.

"Come to us, Henry," said she, in a softened tone, as her lover prepared to take leave. "Come to us, and bring your Vanina with you. I am sure we shall love her, and endeavour to bring you to think better of her. Go, and return not without your manuscript—we shall expect you to tea. Bring all you have written. The whole evening shall be given to the Muses. Lose no time. Good-bye; say not a word—no excuse. Go and fetch it."

Saying this, the parson's daughter shook the proffered hand of her lover with impatience, as if to repeat her injunction, and the devoted Seymour was too well schooled in former times to hear and obey, to have now a will of his own.

"It would be no very easy task to describe in what state of mind the young poet found himself as he proceeded alone on his way to Dearne Park. That short conversation had gone far to bring him into the terms of old acquaintance with his friends. She had called him Harry! He had even addressed her as his dear Caroline! she had read his verses, and expressed a wish to see more of them. She loved a poet, she wished to make him a poet, that she might have reason to love him. O Caroline! who would not be a poet, who would not be great for her sake? Could then his whole life, consecrated to that sole purpose, make him worthy of her affection? Men in love are religiously inclined. Seymour threw himself on his knees on the green bank of the Wye, and raising his eyes towards the west, where the last faint twilight was rapidly fading in the sky, he prayed to his Creator that it might please him to clear

away the gloom in which his mind was involved, and to raise him to the level of the gifted being in whom all his hopes of earthly happiness were centred.

He reached his disconsolate mansion. Before he had called for lights, he laid hand on his manuscripts. He turned a few pages, and cast a hasty glance over such lines as he was wont to dwell upon with complacency. He felt sick at heart, and for a moment hesitated between going or sending a messenger with his excuses. He roused himself by a strong exertion, however, ordered his horse to be saddled, and rode, full speed, to the vicarage.

That evening and the next, and again every evening during winter, Henry was busy at the vicarage. Late in the night and during the best part of the day, he shut himself in his study to grapple with the *God* that was working within his soul. Soon after sunset, his friends awaited him at the cottage with the result of his labours. By dint of unremitting toil, the self-tormenting poet brought his tragedy to a close. No assurance or remonstrance on the part of his friends could reconcile him to his own production, or cure him of his endless misgivings. Every scene, every speech, every line, were written over again and again with restless anxiety, and Vanina underwent as many dresses as a Jewish bride during the nuptial ceremony.

These pains, however, were amply remunerated. Nothing could exceed the interest with which the excitable girl watched over the progress of her lover's *Penelopean* work. She seemed so proud of the office of his adviser and confidant! Her eyes were so earnestly and rapturously rivetted on his countenance as he read over to her every passage which he trusted to have brought to perfection! She learned so spontaneously those verses by heart! they sounded so sweet when she attempted to give them utterance! they looked so beautiful when she transcribed them in her album!—That she loved those verses, in short, it was sufficiently plain, and was it presumptuous to infer that she looked not with indifference on their author?

Vanina was to the Monmouthshire lovers what the romance of *Lancillotto* was to Francesca da Rimini—

“Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse.”

Before the last act was fairly concluded the great word was spoken, and the two young friends were united, as fast, at least, as the communion of souls through the organ of lips could bind them.

The attendance of Mr. Etheridge to those academical lucubrations had been less assiduous than was at first anticipated. The discharge of his duties and the infirmities of age obliged him oftentimes to leave the happy lovers alone. But he had seen enough of the nature of that literary intercourse to be able to divine the ultimate result, without, however, feeling alarm or uneasiness about it. The difference of religion had, indeed, given him some apprehension; but although he had never come to an open understanding upon that subject, he beheld with satisfaction his expectant son-in-law, regularly seated in his uncle's pew, among his congregation, and had little doubt that the liberal-minded youth would be easily led by affection to abjure those tenets which Caroline's father was in duty bound to denounce from his pulpit as erroneous and perverted.

Sure on that ground, the good vicar witnessed with paternal emotion the progress of that mutual attachment that was to realize his fondest expectations. One evening, as he returned late from the deathbed of the poor, he was met on the threshold of his drawing-room by Henry and Caroline, who, without speaking, threw themselves at his feet. The old clergyman threw his arms round their necks, and invoked all the blessings of Heaven on the heads of his children.

On the morrow, Lady Paget, on her way to town, drove up to the vicar's gate, and asked for her niece.

Lady Paget was the widow of a Welsh baronet, who had left her more money than she could fairly dispose of. She was *rather* young still, and handsome; gay, generous and fond of excitement. After the death of her husband she had taken to literature. Her house in Harley Street was the favourite haunt of half the wits of the day. But learning with her was not suffered to interfere with pleasure. Men of genius met at her parties to rid themselves of the burden of their celebrity. Like the knights of olden times, they laid down their panoply ere they were ushered into the lady's bower. They condescended for one evening to behave like well-mannered and good-natured men. Many a spoiled child of fame had been cured of his humours and oddities, of his vanity and self-sufficiency; many a pride-swollen spirit had been sobered and tamed under the levelling system of that half-republican establishment.

Placed herself in a middle station, between the highest and the middle ranks of society, Lady Paget aspired to become the link between aristocracy of birth and aristocracy of mind. Her large fortune, and the lavishness with which she made free with it, rendered her entertainments irresistibly attractive. Her *soirées musicales* and *petits soupers* were the rendezvous of all that London could boast that was select and agreeable. Nowhere else could you feel more crowded, and yet more at your ease.

Of that fashionable circle Caroline Etheridge, it need scarcely be said, was the brightest ornament. Caroline was distantly related to Lady Paget, but not in a degree that could entitle her to that vague appellation of niece, under which she had been introduced into society. She had, however, become strongly attached to her relation, and was for several years her indivisible companion in town.

In the secrecy of her heart, Lady Paget might perhaps have wished to dispose of her niece in a different manner; but finding that the preliminaries of that important negotiation that was to decide Caroline's fate had been irrevocably entered into, she declared herself well pleased with the intended match; she closeted herself for an hour with her niece, and, at the end of a long deliberation, it was agreed between the two plenipotentiaries that Caroline should accompany her aunt to town, that her betrothed should follow soon after, and, having spent a few months amid the gaities of the London season, the two young people should be solemnly united at the parish church of Mary-le-bone, thence to proceed on a short excursion to the continent.

"A poet, you said?" inquired Lady Paget of her niece, as her

travelling-carriage rolled rapidly on the London road. "Did he ever write for the annuals?"

"No, my dear aunt," said Caroline. "Did I not tell you he is just arrived from the continent?"

"Well, my dear," said the aunt, "but that will never do, you know. Of course you must be expected to marry somebody."

"But, aunt, he is *so* diffident."

"Never mind, Caroline dear; we'll bring him out—we'll bring him out."

And out, in fact, they did bring him. Caroline's happiness was too great to be quietly treasured up in her bosom. Her lover's mind had revealed itself before her astonished gaze with a blaze of light which shone as superhuman in the estimation of the devoted girl. Seymour appeared to her great beyond her most sanguine anticipations. Well versed as she was in all the productions of modern literature, both English and foreign, naturally gifted with exquisite sensibility and taste, her judgment of her lover's work was as well grounded as the partiality of affection allowed. But, had she even mistrusted her own opinion, there was her father, who, however friendly to Seymour, could not be said to be in love with him—her father, who, she had good reason to believe, was as thorough a connoisseur as any man in existence, and whose admiration of Seymour's verses even, if possible, exceeded her own. Seymour was a poet, she was sure—such a poet, indeed, as the world never beholds more than once in a century;—and Seymour was her own, and he loved her—oh! as only poets can love!

Had she been able to sit down with this pleasing conviction—had she been satisfied with the tranquil possession of that *rara avis* of lovers—had Seymour, as she was willing to flatter herself, been everything to her,—Dearne Park might have been, as the opera has it, "a heaven of love."

But she wished her judgment to be sanctioned by universal suffrage; she wished the whole world to share her own enthusiasm; she wished all her acquaintance to witness, to applaud and envy her choice. She deemed it a guilt to defraud her own Seymour of the homage that was due to superior intellect, a crime to condemn him to the obscurity of his country-house. As a wife, too, she had a share in his fame, and, whatever might be his mind about it, she was, on her part, by no means inclined to resign it. She did, indeed, contemplate, in the distance, a day of happy retirement—of rural, domestic felicity; but that could only be when she and her husband could rest under the shade of his laurels, when she could feel assured that the eyes of the world would follow the gifted bard in his retreat, that Dearne Park would be looked upon as the shrine of genius, the Abbotsford of the West.

The deluded girl found in her aunt a heart but too fatally prone to sympathize with these extravagant views. Indeed, the young lady's ambition, ever dormant at home, had been suddenly re-awakened at first sight, during the first interview she had with her relative. Lady Paget, though not herself an authoress, nor more than reasonably affected with *bluism*, attached, however, more importance to literary

reputation than is generally the case with persons of fashion in England. She had been instrumental to the rise of more than one of those talented youths who are known through the world under the ever-verdant designation of "promising genius"—a distinction which they not unfrequently carry to their grave; and she persuaded herself, not without some foundation, that, as far as patronage could go, no one could labour at the promotion of rising talent with better chance of success than herself.

There was bustle, and *éclat*, and a throng of carriages in Harley Street. Lady Paget, it was understood, gave one of her grandest *soirées*. It was not a rout, nor a concert, nor yet one of your harum-scarum carnival entertainments that, for want of a better word, go by the name of *bals costumés*, but, what is most extraordinary at a fashionable house in London, a literary reunion.

Lady Paget, it was also rumoured, had on this occasion been very particular in her invitations. Her accomplished as well as her aristocratic friends were, as usual, blended in a crowd, but the literary element evidently prevailed. It was a set of men with high, prominent foreheads, bald heads, and serene eyes; middle-aged ladies, with smooth brows and radiant countenances—soft-speaking, soft-smiling, soft-moving. Our reporter, one of those accurate observers whom nothing escapes, ascertained that ladies were more numerous than gentlemen, that both almost invariably wore eye-glasses, and that some of the most stately matrons were decorated with diadems in the shape of laurel wreaths. Conspicuous among the number were the authors of "Denham," "Chevereux," etc., of "Midian Hay," "Harriett Simple," etc.; one of the nine muses of the British aristocracy lately enumerated in the "Quarterly," and the editress of that *sans-pareil* of fashionable annuals, "The Love Token." The rest of the company was made up of dowager-ladies and countesses, editors of fashionable magazines, authoresses of popular works of fiction, a lord bishop and a swarm of his daughters, and a few young lords privileged to carry on their flirtations with the said bishop's daughters. There were, moreover, two foreigners, a German professor, and a Russian count, who understood not a word of English, a Scotch reviewer, a translator of Sophocles, and last, not least, M—— the actor.

A deep and almost awful silence prevailed in the motley assembly. Every one seemed to be aware that he had come not to talk, but to listen, and waited impatiently for the beginning of the performance.

Lady Paget, who had stood in the centre of the apartment to receive her visitors, seeing her company assembled, it being exactly ten, led her niece to the piano, opened it with her own hands, and said, "Now, child, your overture."

Caroline struck up the first notes of the famous overture to "William Tell" with that masterly hand long since accustomed to command applause. Every now and then she gently tossed her head backwards, as if to shake off the auburn ringlets that danced wantonly about her beautiful face, but in reality to see how her lover stood the tremendous ordeal to which her ambition had brought him.

Seymour sat alone, at a little distance from the piano, his face turned towards the audience—the manuscripts of his "Vanina" lay open on

the table before him. He was pale—paler than usual—and though apparently calm, and almost haughtily serene, it required no very keen observer to perceive that his heart quailed within him. His dress was plain, but strictly correct; the only article of his attire that might have appeared rather objectionable in any but a literary reunion being his neckcloth, which, as accustomed to warm climates, he had never been able to endure the stiff, starched stock then in fashion, consisted merely of a ribbon, and left the neck half uncovered, adding not a little to the ease and gracefulness of the movements of the head. It was what, on the continent, was styled a *cravate à la Byron*.

Our young poet gazed vacantly, and, as it were, mechanically, on the glittering crowd whose attention he had had the supreme rashness to engage for two or more hours, resting his head on his hand, with his elbow slightly leaning for support on the table. He was stared at in return, and especially the bishop's daughters directed against him as well-maintained a fire from their eye-glasses as they ever poured over Rubini or Mario at her Majesty's Theatre. Some occasional whispering and tittering also broke forth from the solemn stillness of the assembly, the meaning of which, if it ever had reached his ears, would not have been greatly calculated to reassure the embarrassment and uneasiness of the poor pilloried poet.

However, he was in for it. Caroline and her aunt had so long insisted on the necessity of producing his drama, that the harassed author had been at last prevailed upon to read part or the whole of it, privately and confidentially, to a very few of Lady Paget's literary friends. Little did the poor wight imagine what was meant by a *very few friends* in London!

Many of his audience were utter strangers to him, for, notwithstanding Lady Paget's endeavours to introduce him, so wide was the range of her acquaintance, that a personal intercourse with all of them was altogether impracticable. But how much greater would his perturbation have been, had he been more familiar with the usages of the country; had he heard the comments of the boldest of the party on the novelty of an exhibition, which, however less uncommon in the land of improvisatori where he had been educated, appeared, to say the least, unexampled in England.

But Seymour was young and handsome—two advantages that went far to secure in his favour the suffrage of the most tender, and, as we have seen, the largest part of his auditory; and as his eyes flashed, and his cheeks flushed with the rapid emotions that the glorious strains of Rossini's overture roused in his bosom, his audience were soon made aware that they stood in presence of one of those gifted beings whose energies need only to be directed to a proper object, to be sure of their ascendancy over their fellow-creatures. Nothing also could equal the manliness, mellowness, and flexibility of the tones of his voice, and, notwithstanding a slight *cantilena* which he had contracted from his attendance at a declamatory school in Italy, his vivid and impassionate delivery had something in itself irresistibly suasive and winning.

He had little or no action; at least his diffidence and trepidation

did not allow him to make any attempt at gesticulation, but there was an eloquence in his countenance, a language in the ebbing and flowing of his flitting complexion, an expression in the movement of his head, in the quivering of his lips, in the very faltering of his voice, that had power to rivet the attention, and found its way, unerringly, immediately to the sympathies of the bystanders.

The first words were, as might be expected, almost inaudible; but as he warmed with his subject, as his eyes met Caroline's, who had silently stolen from the piano and resumed her seat by the side of her aunt, scarcely less pale and less anxious than the poet himself—the rest of the company faded from his view, and he proceeded with that impressive ardour, with that heart-storming vehemence, with which he alone who created can read, and which proves how little the most unearthly music can add to the natural melody of the human language.

Caroline had grasped Lady Paget's hand, and pressed it convulsively. She cast a rapid glance over such of the company as she thought were most likely to sympathize with her feelings. She watched the effect that those sweet tones to which her innermost heart-strings so readily responded, would have on their dull and impassive ears. She spied their countenance as the reader lighted on one of those passages that had so often brought tears in her eyes. She hated them for their inconceivable, transcendent stupidity. She would have blasted with her angry looks any one who had so far ventured to infringe all rules of decorum as to whisper or yawn in her presence.

Alas, poor Caroline! and yet that was for her an evening of triumph, of full, unequalled success. The first act had been listened to with that respectful but rather frigid attention which characterizes an English audience, especially among persons belonging to the *nil admirari* school of good-breeding. But as scene followed after scene, and the interest attached to the subject, and the rapidity and intensity of action, the beauty of style and the real merits, in short, of the composition, became apparent, the ladies especially were carried away by their enthusiasm, and gave the most unequivocal testimonies of their satisfaction.

As the last words were drowned in a burst of unaristocratic but uncontrollable applause, Seymour shivered all over, as if all his vital spirits had flown tumultuously to his heart, and the overwhelmed Caroline buried her face in her aunt's bosom to conceal her tears.

Scarcely had the excitement of these first plaudits subsided, when M——, the distinguished tragedian, advanced with a dignified respectfulness among the titled crowd, and laying his hands on the manuscripts that had dropped from the poet's hands, "This masterpiece," he exclaimed, bowing obsequiously, "must become my property. The poor artists of the Haymarket are not gifted with the inspiration with which he alone who dictated can render due justice to such poetical effusions; but deign to trust your drama with us, and it shall be attended to with all the zeal and diligence that our art can contrive."

A loud acclamation followed the motion of the honest tragedian.

Seymour, not well prepared for the compliment, instinctively laid his hand on his "Vanina," but a glance from Caroline sufficed to bring him to reason, and the delighted actor was suffered to carry off his prize.

On that very evening, during that first ebriety of recent success, poor Caroline began to reap the bitter fruits of her vain glory. The editress of the "Love Token" begged to be introduced to the hero of the evening, and without further ceremony bade him to be seated at her right hand, and, as the phrase goes, utterly *monopolized* him for the rest of the evening; and as the bishop's daughters, long-necked as cranes, tall and erect as Lombardy poplars, stood crowding around him, gazing on him in stupendous amazement, the loving girl, who was not even permitted to catch a glimpse of her Henry, began to be visited with some strange twitches of jealousy, alarmed lest the day should come when Seymour's popularity should raise a barrier between her and her happiness, and when the flattery of the world should wean her lover from her. Such were not the evils, however, that Providence had in store for her.

Scarcely a fortnight afterwards the good people of London swallowed a hasty and half-cooked dinner, to be in time for the new tragedy at the Haymarket. But the author of the new tragedy, and she whose life seemed to depend on its success, had no dinner at all. Seymour was early at the theatre in a private box with Lady Paget, her niece, and the editress of the "Love Token," who, since the eventful evening of experimental rehearsal, had become Caroline's shadow. The young ladies surveyed the audience with eager opera-glasses, to recognise the numerous friends who had promised to attend. But Seymour shrank back in his box, as if anxious above all things to pay due attention to the eldest lady, but in reality because, although almost utterly unknown in London, he felt as if all the eyes of the mighty audience were fixed upon him.

Alas, poor votary of fame! come forward and dare to look at this dread jury that are here convened to pass their verdict on the work of your brain. See among those rows of vulgar gaping faces in the pit, still stupified by the first drowsiness of the digestion of their honest English dinners, whom you would deem likely to comprehend the poetry of your soul; whom you would select as fit to be introduced into the sanctuary of your mind, whom you would raise to the level of your loftiest inspirations?—and is it of such a crowd of these men, for each of whom, singly, you can entertain no feeling short of utter contempt, that you, proud man, stoop to court the gregarious acclamation?—is it from the roaring of such a menagerie that you, privileged being, you phoenix, suffer yourself to be disturbed from the serenity of the ethereal region, through which it was given to your broad-winged genius to expatiate?—is it, in short, and to make use of a homely phrase, before such a flock of pigs that you are so lavish of the gems of your thought? Can you ever hope to captivate their attention, unless it be by the broad grins of Jim Crow, or the exploits of Jack Sheppard?

True, there are a few among the vast assembly to whom our sweeping conclusion does not equally apply. That sour-looking personage,

in the threadbare suit of black, is a poet himself, and a critic : that blond-ringleted miss in the dress-circle is a novel-reader and a sentimentalist ; and that French governess by her side has been for many years a mistress of elocution. But the first is too much engrossed with the importance of his censorial office, the latter too much penetrated with the dignity of their sex, to give way to their feelings. The sable gentleman will perhaps turn away his face, the blond damsel will perhaps hide her tears in a moment of sudden commotion—but he would think it beneath his respectability, she would deem it ungentle, to applaud. It is only the coarsest part of your audience that condescend to give any outward sign of approbation or blame. None but ungloved, unwashed hands that clap ; none but the vulgar that claim the privilege of hooting and hissing.

"*Vanina d'Ornano*" was not a work deprived of such intrinsic merit as might recommend it to the attention of an intelligent public. The subject could never be better chosen. The fierce Corsican chieftain, Sampiero, deliberately murdering a beloved wife, under the impulse of overstrained notions of patriotism, and yet full of enthusiastic devotion, kneeling to the fair creature who is about to expiate by a violent death an offence originating in excess of love ; and the terrified but resigned and dutiful *Vanina* claiming the homage of the knight while she acknowledges the right of the husband, and asking, as a last boon, to be strangled with the very scarf she had in happier days given him to wear at the tournament or on the battle-field—all this constitutes a complex of deep, gentle, unexplored pathetic, and ought to afford to a fertile imagination such a theme as gives us reason to wonder that it has not, at least with notorious success, been previously hit upon.

Seymour had assuredly made the best of his subject. The long assiduous cares he had bestowed on his drama had left nothing to desire as to unity and plausibility of plan, as to the developement and delineation of characters, as to harmony and loftiness of style. But he had little or no knowledge of stage effect. Correct and almost perfect as a literary production, his piece stood little chance of success as a dramatic performance. Those who had been so warm, and, pretty generally sincere, in their commendation of that juvenile essay, when actuated by the prestige of the poet's own declamation, were themselves surprised at the tameness and languor that pervaded the whole of that chaste but unimpassioned exhibition. The very nicety and fastidiousness with which the mistrustful author had been tampering, as it were, with his own imagination, had spread a coldness on the progress of his action, and made of it a mosaic work, rather admirable for the high finish of its parts than striking or interesting as a whole.

Moreover, "*Vanina*" was a classical work. The ideas with which the young poet's mind had been imbued during his college education at Rome, had induced him to look upon the models of Greek and Latin antiquity, not only as the best, but as the sole standard of perfection. Now these classical notions, which begin to lose ground even in what are emphatically called classical countries, if ever they prevailed, have long since been exploded in England ; and, notwithstanding the solitary instance in which a very superior genius recently knew

how to attach a deep interest even to a work of that description, it can be frankly asserted that few tragedies after the old Grecian cast, unless they appear before the public under the auspices of the author of "Ion," are likely to live long on an English stage.

But it was not on the ground of its good or bad qualities that "Vanina" was to encounter its fate. There are a hundred accessory circumstances on which the ultimatum of popular judgment depends, much more than on the intrinsic value of the piece itself—a hundred mysterious, all-powerful, inexorable agencies, which the proud Seymour neglected or scorned to propitiate. He had no free tickets, no hired *claqueurs*, no interested partizans, except his few aristocratic friends in the dress circle, whose demonstration, if they had ever condescended to make any in his favour, was sure, out of sheer contradiction, to call forth the jealous animadversion of the many-headed mobocracy above and below. Some untoward events also conspired from the very outset to keep the audience that evening in a state of unwonted restlessness and clamour. A parcel of lawless schoolboys, absent without leave from one of the most fashionable establishments near town, after carousing and revelling the whole afternoon at a low tavern in the vicinity, had been seized with a sudden whim to see the new play, had rushed in in a state of intoxication, and taken possession of the centre of the pit, whence one or two of them had, before the raising of the curtain, been laid hold of by the police, and turned out of the house for misdemeanour. The remaining party had been sobered and struck dumb for a moment; but a sullen determination had been entered into by the most daring of them to leave nothing unattempted to mar the amusement of their peaceable neighbours, and to wreak their vengeance on the luckless drama and its inoffensive author. They were most deplorably true to their engagement; and what with their broad jests, and their outrageous peals of laughter, their crowing and squeaking, and snoring and sneezing—with the cries of "shame" and "silence" of the vexed and scandalized honest citizens around them, and the jostling and pushing of the vainly-interfering police, it soon became impossible to restore order and calm. A mirthful mood, so deplorably jarring with the solemn pathos, to which the action on the stage was intended to wind up the spectators' mind, gradually gained ground and became contagious, and when, as the evil powers would have it, towards the close of the fourth act, the interest of the drama being at the highest pitch, one of the minor actors, by one of those awkward incidents against which it is in the power of no human intelligence to provide, dropped one of his whiskers, the roaring of the brutal multitude knew no limits. Scarcely a word could be heard of the whole ensuing act, and the curtain fell amidst such a finale of howls and groans as the Haymarket had not, time out of memory, witnessed the equal.

The wretched Seymour, who had seen nothing, knew nothing of the silly farce that was acting in the pit, little accustomed to the misrule of an English audience, was at a loss to comprehend why so many of his countrymen should so wantonly conspire to the demolition of his dearest hopes. At first he rubbed his eyes and shook his head as if to rouse himself from a dream; but as the noise increased, and there could be no mistaking its object, he turned deadly pale; a cold mois-

ture oozed from his forehead, and he remained during nearly the rest of the performance motionless, mute, insensible to the distracted words of consolation that the young ladies, who had now withdrawn in disgust from the front of their box, were vainly attempting to administer to his mortally wounded spirit. At length, startled by one of the sudden uproars that announced the coming close of his martyrdom, he seized his hat, and rushed from the house, leaving the ladies to take care of themselves.

The failure of one of his pieces is no great disgrace to the French or English dramatist, and by no means considered as an irreparable calamity. Writing is for him a trade, and as much liable to the ups and downs of earthly vicissitudes as any other money-making concern. He looks down on his incensed judges with a philosophical sneer, and repairs to a good supper with his friends, the actors, calm, stoic, impassible as if nothing had been.

But with Seymour it was otherwise. He had been brought up in a country where, as literature can entertain no hope of any solid reward, it must rest satisfied, and aspire to nothing beyond the vain clamour of popular enthusiasm. He was rich, and had been impelled to enter into the dangerous arena by no selfish view of pecuniary preferment. That single drama had been the object of his secret pride for years : he had strained his faculties even to their utmost exhaustion to bring it to its present state of perfection. He had been wrought up by his friends to the fond persuasion that it was well worth, that it would well repay, all the cares he had bestowed upon it. But that was not all. Caroline laid as much stress as himself on that ill-fated performance. The glory that its success was to confer on its author, he thought, was the chief title to which the ambitious girl had, in her fond anticipation, yielded her heart. In vain would the worldly wisdom of his friends have urged the utter oblivion into which the memory of his signal discomfiture would have been buried in less than three days, and the kind forbearance with which, while he continued the owner of Dearne Park, even the remotest allusion to that unlucky evening would, in his presence, have been carefully avoided. The chill of despair spread its blasting ravages on his morbid sensibilities ; the proud heart of the poet was broken.

On the morning the messenger sent by Lady Paget to his hotel, reported that Seymour had returned nearly at midnight, ordered post-horses, and started for Dover.

Farther intelligence stated that he had been met by several of his acquaintance in various parts of the continent, until, two years after his expatriation, he was said to have taken holy orders in the convent of St. Onofrio at Rome.

Caroline has been these last two years absent from the gay circles at Almack's, and Lady Paget's *soirées*, deprived of her sweet presence, have been pronounced *tristes* beyond endurance. On the first Sunday after the performance of the twice-murdered "Vanina," a long and elaborate article, vindicating its excellence, appeared in the "Literary Gazette," signed X. Y. Z. It was afterwards ascertained that it was penned by the fair hand of the compassionate editress of the "Love Token."

THE BACHELOR OF FIFTY.¹

BY CHARLES DE BERNARD.

MADAME d'EPENOV, whose summons the Marquis de Morsy was now hastening to obey, was a lady about his own age, or it might be a year or two older. Unlike the generality of her sex, she had marked the approach of age with calmness and resignation, and saw no necessity for expiating, by the scrupulous austerities of a tardy devotion, a youth of pleasure, during which, some charitable persons hinted, she had shone with a somewhat profane brilliancy. In her case the oratory had not succeeded to the boudoir. Devotional exercises, which with so many women form the sole interest of declining life, filled but a small portion of her existence; she seemed to perform them less from a conviction of their intrinsic worth, than from a respect for outward appearances. Never seen at mass except on Sundays, she belonged to no pious association, and the name of her confessor remained a secret. In the eyes of the society in which she lived, she was consequently looked upon as an *esprit fort*; a reputation generally little advantageous to a woman of fifty, but which in her particular instance met with a toleration so universal, and at the same time so unusual, that we shall not be considered tedious if we explain the reasons that justified it.

If Madame d'Epenoy applied herself with too little fervour to spiritual things, she made amends by her ardent and indefatigable taste for worldly intrigue. Had she been a man, she would have been a politician: like M. Gastoul, she would have aspired to a seat in the chamber, and might perhaps have become a minister; being a woman, the activity of her mind found a sphere of action more limited, yet not less animated. As the departure of her youth, and with it of her beauty, shut her out from the career of coquetry, she had retired from it philosophically, and with a good grace, and had struck out for herself new occupations better suited to her time of life. Without mentioning the care she bestowed on a very considerable property, which she managed with a scrupulous economy, the cause of which will be explained hereafter, her boudoir was the scene of as much business as the chambers of a lawyer in first-rate practice.

Belonging to the *ancien régime* in right of her father, who died an *émigré*, and to the new in right of her husband, who fell at Montinirail, she had friends in either camp, whom she cultivated with equal graciousness. Independent in character, and unbiassed by prejudice, her opinions tended rather towards progress than retrogression, although her good taste restrained within just bounds the propensity to keep pace with the spirit of the times. As, in her youth, she had the taste to be a coquette without scandalising the society in which she moved; so in more mature age she was unlikely to give umbrage to it for the sake of speculative opinions. Thanks to this prudent

¹ Continued from page 267.

conduct, Madame d'Epenoy, who lived in the rue de Grenelle St. Germain, held in that exclusive and intolerant quarter an exceptional position; a position, indeed, of which it would have been difficult to find a second example.

Liberal and without devotion, this double defect, by which another would have been undone, was pardoned in her, even by the most censorious; it seemed as though she were privileged to do as she pleased, and had a plenary indulgence for all her errors. But the knowledge of the world which Madame d'Epenoy displayed under all circumstances, was not her only claim to the consideration, we might almost say the influence, she obtained, in a great many houses. A cause, more efficacious because founded on views of personal interest, strengthened her credit, and ensured her everywhere a gracious reception; this was the almost certain advantage to be derived from her intimacy. Truly devoted to her friends, she was always ready to serve even an indifferent acquaintance; and in so doing, she yielded less to the natural tendency of a benevolent character, than to the workings of an active mind, to which repose was distasteful, nay impossible.

The position of Madame d'Epenoy admirably seconded her obliging disposition: having had a large acquaintance both under the Empire and the Restoration, she maintained her intimacy, unbroken, with several influential men of both classes. She might be seen in the morning in the cabinet of a minister soliciting a place for one of her protégés devoted to the Revolution of July, and the evening might find her pleading the cause of a Spanish refugee, or a prisoner of La Vendée, at an hotel in the Faubourg St. Germain. Legitimates, moderates, republicans, enjoyed an equal share of her patronage, which, like the sun, was no respecter of persons, and shone impartially upon all.

From what we have said, it is easy to conclude that Madame d'Epenoy had a numerous *clientèle*. Had the benevolent ministry, which she loved to fulfil, but one branch—and it was, we confess, a principal one—this alone would have furnished her with employment sufficient to keep her activity from rusting. This branch, covered throughout with leaves, some green and fresh, but more frequently sere and yellow, was the one of which M. d'Epenoy had spoken so irreverently in his conversation with the Marquis de Morsy. Like the generality of women who have fulfilled their destiny in love and maternity, Madame d'Epenoy sincerely compassionated those whose hard lot forbade their experiencing either the one or the other. Celibacy, which for a man is not without its advantages, seemed to her an anomalous, unhappy, almost ridiculous condition for her own sex; and as inactive compassion did not suit the vivacity of her temper, she no sooner perceived the evil, than she racked her brain to provide the remedy. Widows who were disposed to pair again were certain of her encouragement and assistance: she felt a warm interest in spinsters without fortune or without attractions, whose establishment was rendered difficult by one or other of these defects: but it was in encouraging virgins run to seed, to blossom again with a promise of matrimonial fruits, that the chief fervour of her good offices was displayed. The position of this latter class

touched her particularly, and she held its claims to a fair share of favour to be the more incontestable that they were founded on seniority.

"Girls still in their convents have the future, widows the past, to cheer them," she would sometimes say; "if necessary, *they* can wait, for anticipation or remembrance makes their state endurable; but how can I prescribe patience to old maids, who have neither the consolations of memory, nor the illusions of hope, to reconcile them to the present?"

In conformity with this just distinction, Madame d'Epenoy divided her protégées into three classes, and though equally devoted to the interests of all, she bestowed her chief attention on that in which a lengthened celibacy, combined with ripeness of years, constituted what she laughingly denominated "a case of urgency." According to her, this urgency began to show itself at five-and-twenty; at thirty, it became imperious; at thirty-five, there was not a moment to be lost; and at forty, the *demoiselle à marier* was in the condition of a soul in purgatory. If, by dint of negotiation and intrigue, Madame d'Epenoy had succeeded in rescuing one of this unfortunate class from the Gehenna in which she languished, Louis XIV., when he placed his grandson on the throne of Spain, could not have felt more satisfaction than she experienced in her benevolent triumph. And indeed, his success was far more easily attained, for a prince may more reasonably aspire to a crown, than a spinster, doubly arrived at years of discretion, to a wreath of orange flowers.

After what has been already said respecting the character of Madame d'Epenoy, it is superfluous to add, that her conduct towards the opposite sex was regulated in strict conformity with the matrimonial combinations which occupied her thoughts without intermission. She wasted little attention on married men, for, bigamy being interdicted, she had nothing to hope for from them. They, however, acquired some little value in her eyes, when, as fathers of families, they had under their control a son or two of marriageable age. But with bachelors the case was different; whatever their years, whether boys just let loose from college, or gray beards in the last stage of dotage, provided that fortune had not been a stepmother to them, they were looked on as belonging to her by right of pursuit, quite as legitimately as the hare belongs to the sportsman, or the ship of a hostile nation to a privateer furnished with letters of marque.

Thanks to her knowledge of human nature, to her ingenuity, to her untiring perseverance—thanks, above all, to her talents, which would have done credit to a first-rate diplomatist, Madame d'Epenoy was seldom unsuccessful in the charitable employment she had undertaken. Indeed she obtained, occasionally, results at which she was herself astonished, and which seemed almost fabulous. Her rights to the title of the providence of spinsters, laughingly bestowed upon her by her son, were really legitimate and incontestable. Her friends pretended that it was as impossible to picture to themselves Madame d'Epenoy without the necessary accompaniment of a client to provide for, as for an artist to paint Jupiter without a beard, or Cupid without wings. This satirical assertion was fully borne out, at the

moment when our tale begins, by a confidential dialogue which took place in the Rue de Grenelle St. Germain, between Madame d'Epenoy in person, and another lady evidently of long standing on her list.

The scene in which this conference was held, was a small boudoir on the Entresol, hung with gray paper, with a red flock border, by no means remarkable either for freshness or elegance. The furniture it contained seemed cramped for want of room. The clock and candlesticks were too large for the mantelpiece: the picture frames touched the ceiling, and one door was condemned, to afford a place for the sofa, whose proportions were ill suited to the size of the apartment. But however shabby and old-fashioned might be the appearance of this den, when compared with the magnificent style of modern furnishing, it had its frequenters, both male and female, as untiring in their assiduities as the courtiers of the *Œil de Bœuf* at the levee of the *Grand Monarque*. This fact requires no explanation, as the reader is already aware that in that narrow chimney-corner, on the medallions of that faded carpet, under shelter of that mysterious screen, was carried on that most interesting branch of social industry, the manufacture of marriages!

Madame d'Epenoy was seated in an easy chair, her feet resting on the fender, and her elbow on a guéridon, on which, thrown together in confusion, were a newspaper, a snuff-box, a pair of spectacles, and a box of pâte de jujube, with her favourite cat sleeping peacefully in the midst. The vivacity of her glance, the regularity of her features, and the sweetness of her smile, bore witness to her former beauty; whilst the open exhibition of her gray hair, and the simplicity of her dress, showed how little trouble she took to conceal, and how sincerely she resigned herself to the approach of age.

Opposite to Madame d'Epenoy, seated on the edge of her chair, in a stiff perpendicular attitude, was a being, who claimed recognition as a woman, in right of her shawl, her petticoats, and some other feminine attributes in her dress, but who might have assumed masculine attire without exciting in the mind of any one a suspicion of her sex. This bony and angular creature was furnished with large features, rendered more ugly by an expression of habitual ill-humour; and her brickdust complexion, when heated by anger, communicated to her broad face no inconsiderable resemblance to a copper basin. The shaft of the column was in perfect keeping with its capital, but, by some capricious freak of nature, this unattractive *ensemble* terminated in a pair of rather pretty feet. Since uncharitably disposed persons were used to remark, in consequence, that of all the person of Mademoiselle Alphonsine du Boissier, the feet were certain to be the first part visible, so much care did she take, whether sitting or standing, to draw attention to them. We will finish this portrait with a remark, which to us seems very important; viz. that the original was within a very few years of that critical era which we have likened to a state of purgatory.

To obviate this catastrophe had been for some time Madame d'Epenoy's principal object, and although her endeavours had hitherto been attended with but little success, she persevered in them with admirable constancy. The more difficulties she encountered in pro-

viding an establishment for her protégée, the more heartily did she labour in her behalf; for self-love gave a new stimulus to her benevolence; and the failure of her first negotiations having gained some notoriety, she felt it a point of honour to silence impertinent pleasantry by bringing the matter to a prosperous issue. In a word, the marriage of Mademoiselle du Boissier had become Madame d'Epenoy's fixed idea, and she would frequently interrupt a conversation on some other subject, by remarking, with evident unconsciousness and absence of mind, "This is all very true; but it will not provide a husband for my poor Alphonsine."

With persons to whose discretion she could trust, she usually summed up with a phrase hardly less inevitable than the *delenda Carthago!* of Cato, or the vote of General Bertrand for the abolition of the censorship on the press.

"Do help me, like a good creature, to find a husband for my poor Alphonsine."

In spite of the desperate manner in which she had been hawked about, Mademoiselle du Boissier had not as yet met with a mortal sufficiently generous to raise her to the rank of a married woman. To the anxieties of hope deferred might, perhaps, be attributed the cloud that habitually overspread her countenance, and which, on the occasion of which we write, had settled into an expression of despondency nearly akin to dismay.

The silence, which reigned in Madame d'Epenoy's drawing-room, had remained unbroken for several minutes. The mistress of the house was drumming with her fingers on the lid of her snuff-box, and casting furtive glances from time to time at her visitor, who, with eyes fixed on the ground, sat, stiff and immovable on her chair, as Lot's wife after her transformation.

"What would you have, my dear?" said the old lady at length, in a tone of compassion; "it is annoying, I confess; and since M. Ferrand would have suited you so exactly, it is doubly unfortunate that you should not suit him: but then what could have possessed you to receive his first visit in tight sleeves?"

"Why should I not, madame?" replied Mademoiselle du Boissier, raising her head; "they are quite the fashion."

"Are you yet to learn that good taste should always be preferred to fashion? I do not find fault with tight sleeves in themselves, but they are becoming only to women whose bust and arms are faultless."

"I do not see—"

"You do not see your own defects, my dear Alphonsine; few people are very clear-sighted in that respect. But I must take the liberty to say, I who have a right to speak frankly to you, that in your case a little more attention to the becoming would not be altogether thrown away; had you worn sleeves of reasonable dimensions, you would not have furnished occasion for M. Ferrand's satirical remarks, and your marriage might at this moment be concluded."

"But did those unfortunate sleeves so entirely disgust him?" asked Mademoiselle du Boissier, struggling to repress a sigh.

"Not the sleeves exactly."

"What was it then, may I ask?"

"It is useless dwelling farther on the subject; the affair is at an end, and the best thing we can do, is to think no more of it."

"Pray answer my question; I wish particularly to know what M. Ferrand said to you."

"Nothing that you need take offence at; I should not have permitted that. It was merely a foolish joke."

"O! a joke."

"Yes, and in the worst possible taste; but these gentlemen of the faculty have never been remarkable for refinement."

"Once again, what did he say?"

"Well, then, he told me—but I am sure you will be angry—you know that all persons of his profession are a little given to materialism; he, in particular, appears to pay great attention to form. The habit of looking on everything in a medical point of view may possibly have influenced his taste;—perhaps his antipathy to thin women may be founded on the idea that they cannot be in strong health."

"And he told you—" repeated Mademoiselle Alphonsine impatiently.

"Well, then, my dear child," said Madame d'Epenoy, who, in spite of all her good-nature, was not without a slight vein of sarcasm in her composition, "since you will know all, M. Ferrand told me, that having long ago finished his medical studies, he felt no inclination to recommence a course of osteology."

Glowing with indignation to the very tips of her ears, Mademoiselle du Boissier affected a disdainful laugh.

"Nor do I," said she, "feel any inclination to marry a man of coarse manners, with a red nose, and a strong odour of tobacco. I disliked him at our first interview, and my only reason for not telling you so at once was, that I feared you might think me ungrateful, after all the trouble you had taken on my account."

"This is all very well," replied Madame d'Epenoy, gently stroking the back of her cat, which had just awakened; "but I really begin to think that you are under the influence of some evil spell! I was calculating this morning the matches arranged for you, and afterwards broken off, during the last five years, and the number quite appalled me. Twenty-seven, or twenty-eight! I never met with a case so disheartening."

"But, madame, it is not my fault!" observed Mademoiselle Alphonsine, deprecatingly.

"At least it is not for want of good will on your part; but that is not enough. Your position calls imperatively for a certain tact, in which you are unfortunately entirely deficient, and which my instructions have hitherto failed in imparting to you. Were you very young, very rich, and very pretty, that difficulty might easily be smoothed away, but at thirty-seven—"

"Thirty-six, madame."

"Thirty-six, or thirty-seven, it matters little which; with a fortune of eighty thousand francs at the utmost, and a person—not remarkable either way—you ought to be agreeable, very agreeable. I do not mean to reproach you with any deficiency in this respect, but the great point is to be agreeable with judgment, and at the right moment."

Madame d'Epenoy had been too charming a woman in her youth for any one to dispute her right to lecture on the art of pleasing. Secure of being listened to with deference, she took a long pinch of snuff, and leaned back in her chair, with somewhat of the dictatorial manner of a professor.

"My dear," said she at length, pointing to the *console*, "you see that vase. If you wished to move it, in what way would you take hold of it?"

"By the handle," answered Mademoiselle du Boissier, like a school-girl repeating her lesson.

"Just so. Now with men you must act in the same way. Every man has his handle—a weak point, a predominant taste, a passion, a mania, if you like to call it so. We women have equally our salient point; but it is almost universally one of these two, vanity or affection; whilst in men its varieties are infinite, by reason of the multiplicity of positions in which they may be placed, and from which we are excluded. I have explained this to you several times already. But it is all labour lost. In your twenty-seven or twenty-eight interviews, has it ever happened to you to discover this providential handle, to grasp it at once, and secure your establishment by one dexterous stroke of policy? Alas, never! on the contrary, you seem to make a point of doing the reverse of what is politic; and this certainly not from want of salutary warning. To cite but one example; let me remind you of your last interview,—not yesterday's—the one three months ago, with Monsieur—Monsieur—"

"Monsieur le Biancourt," said the spinster humbly.

"Exactly, M. de Biancourt. I forewarn you that he is a grave man, tired of the world, who, in consequence of a series of domestic troubles experienced during his first marriage, holds coquetry in abhorrence, and desires nothing in a wife so much as serious and solid qualities. Your lesson is taught you beforehand, and I, in full security, am perfectly satisfied that for once all must go right. You appear—and what a figure meets my eyes?—a young lady dressed for a ball—flowers in your hair, a trimming of point lace on a dress almost up to your knees, to display your feet, (of which, by-the-bye, you rather exaggerate the beauty,) cameos, brooches, bracelets, and I know not what besides—ornaments enough to stock a jeweller's shop! You had not advanced three steps into the room before I saw, by the contraction of M. de Biancourt's eyebrows, that the case was hopeless. Observe, too, that he was an excellent match; very good-natured, in spite of his look of severity, and that, once married, you might have turned him round your little finger: the only thing to be avoided was scaring him at first sight."

"You are perfectly right, madame," said Mademoiselle du Boissier stiffly, "yet I cannot regret my want of judgment; for if my dress had not the good fortune to suit the taste of M. de Biancourt, on the other hand his appearance and conversation were anything but agreeable to me, and I cannot sufficiently congratulate myself on not having become his wife."

"Really, my dear, you play your part with most edifying dignity," replied Madame d'Epenoy; "I am convinced that were we to go over the list of men who have declined the happiness of being yours, not

one would find favour in your eyes; nevertheless I have, more than once, heard you speak more humbly. I remember that you generally, not to say always, found these gentlemen very much to your taste, and you must allow me to retain my opinion, in spite of the high tone you assume to-day, that had any one of them made you an offer, which I regret to say none of them ever did, you would hardly have had the heart to refuse him."

"*Mon Dieu!* madame, do you think me, then, so anxious for a husband?" asked Mademoiselle Alphonsine, blushing purple.

"I beg your pardon, what did you say?" inquired the old lady, raising herself in her chair, and looking at her protégée with an air of ironical surprise.

"At any rate, if I wish to be married, it is only because a single woman has a false position in society, or rather, has no position at all. And as to marrying for the sake of a husband, I assure you most sincerely, that if I consulted my own taste in that respect—"

"You would remain single?"

"I can see nothing so very attractive in constant intercourse with a man, who is probably coarse, vulgar, and unintellectual, certainly selfish and egotistical."

Madame d'Epenoy leant forward, and lowering her voice, as if she feared to be overheard by some invisible witness of their dialogue,—
"My dear friend," she said, "we are alone, and you know that I will not betray you. Open the floodgates of your heart, and give your pent-up indignation vent; it will do you good. But never repeat before others what you have just now said to me."

"And why should I not, madam?"

"Because, although it is frequently right to conceal our wishes from the public, it is always wrong to asperse them."

"I say nothing but what I think."

"I may believe you, but *others* would be more incredulous. A stranger hearing you rail thus at poor mankind, might perhaps be reminded of the fox in the fable, and fancy that matrimony was not yet ripe enough for your taste."

Madame d'Epenoy sank back again into her chair, and Mademoiselle Alphonsine, blushing deeper than before, bit her lip until the blood came. This was not the first time that a storm had threatened to burst forth between the protectress and her protégée. The patience of the latter was often taxed to the utmost, to endure without reply the satirical remarks with which the old lady loved to season her good offices. On these occasions she prudently held her peace, however; for a quarrel with Madame d'Epenoy would have been equivalent to a renunciation of all hopes of marriage. On Madame d'Epenoy's side, although she would have moved heaven and earth to find a husband for "her poor Alphonsine," she could not help bearing her a secret grudge. She felt towards her the same sort of ill-humour that a shopkeeper may be supposed to experience at the sight of goods which have remained upon his shelves until they are perfectly unsaleable.

"I might have made a dozen marriages," she would sometimes pettishly say, "in the time I have wasted upon her."

On such occasions it was very ill-advised in Mademoiselle du Boissier to profess her antipathy to men, and her indifference to marriage; some bitter sarcasm was the unfailing chastisement of her rashness; quickly recovering, however, her habitual good-humour, Madame d'Epenoy would spare no pains to heal the wound she had inflicted on the self-love of her protégée, and endeavour to obliterate the remembrance of it by renewed efforts to provide her with a husband.

After a short silence, Madame d'Epenoy again spoke, and in a gayer tone,

"Come, my dear, do not pout. A cross look will spoil the prettiest face! Napoleon and Louis XVIII. would sometimes say a cutting word, and if I do the same, you must forgive me in consideration of my good intentions. I promise you to redouble my zeal, never to rest until you are satisfactorily established. Keep up your courage; we will succeed at last, and you shall lose nothing by a little delay! In the mean time I have one advice to give you, or rather there is a point on which I wish to take counsel with you."

"I am all attention, madame," replied Mademoiselle du Boissier, a little soothed by the change in Madame d'Epenoy's manner.

"Until now you have not deigned to think of a husband of more than five-and-forty years of age; and, indeed, what trouble have I not had to lead you even to that length! Two years ago you desired one of your own standing; last year you would have accepted one of forty; now you are more reasonable, but you must make up your mind to go a little farther. If you listen to my advice, you will give yourself a yet wider field."

"Anything rather than marry an old man."

"At fifty a man can hardly be called old."

"At fifty!" cried Mademoiselle Alphonsine, in a tone which revealed the antipathy felt by most young ladies of a certain age for men who are going down the hill; an antipathy, I grieve to say, most heartily reciprocated.

Madame d'Epenoy could not restrain a gesture of impatience.

"Are you relapsing into your idle dreams?" said she, somewhat sharply. "Must I repeat the same thing to you a thousand times? As I have told you again and again, the presumption of these men is such, that, at the same age, in fact, they consider themselves our juniors; and many a man of fifty, whom I could name, would have the impertinence to consider you too old for him. It is scandalous and detestable, but so it is. Take, then, the world as you find it, and do not expect that it should make any exceptions in your favour. In your case, to be candid with you, the idea of a young husband will only lead you on from disappointment to disappointment—a romantic dream from which I hoped that M. Gastoul had completely aroused you."

At the name of M. Gastoul, the green eyes of the spinster shot forth a glance of hatred, and her lips trembled with passion.

"I do not understand your allusion," said she, with affected indifference.

"Ah! *ma chère, permettez*," retorted Madame d'Epenoy, who, finding her pupil rebellious, had again recourse to her tone of sar-

casm—"If you are so forgetful, I am not, and as your memory is at fault, you shall have the benefit of mine. Four years ago, M. Gastoul occupied all your thoughts; you spoke of nothing else, and wherever he went, there were you always to be found. It was evident to the least clear-sighted that you had made up your mind to captivate and to marry him. The stake was well worth playing for;—he was rich, clever, and five or six years younger than yourself;—but, unluckily, your kind intentions in his favour met with the blackest ingratitude. That ill-mannered person had even the audacity to make a jest of your obvious inclination, and, to complete the measure of his impertinence, did he not take the liberty, three years since, to marry a young, charming, high-born wife, with a portion of three or four hundred thousand francs? This was, indeed, scandalous treatment, and, in your place, I would never forgive him."

The vindictive expression assumed by Mademoiselle Alphonsine's countenance at the mere mention of M. Gastoul's name, appeared to denote this last recommendation as superfluous; but the ridicule of Madame d'Epenoy cut her vanity to the quick, and opened afresh the wound which for more than four years had rankled in her heart. She answered, in a voice choked with suppressed passion, "That Madame Gastoul is younger, richer, more beautiful than I, is a fact not to be disputed; nor will I deny that she has every advantage that I want, and that I should gain greatly by resembling her; nevertheless, all things considered, I am just as well satisfied to be without her powers of fascination, and remain as I am."

"The fox in the fable again," said Madame d'Epenoy, with a quiet smile.

Mademoiselle du Boissier smiled in return, with an air of disdain. "I am not rich," repeated she; "I am not handsome, nor am I any longer in the prime of youth; but I have at least no *liaisons* of which I need be ashamed."

In the heat of her anger she did not remember that the stone thus cast at Madame Gastoul fell heavily on the head of her protectress. Madame d'Epenoy, however, without appearing to see any personality in the accusation, quickly replied, "Do you mean by that to insinuate that Madame Gastoul deceives her husband?"

"Ah, poor man!" cried Mademoiselle Alphonsine, with insulting pity.

"Listen to me for a moment, my dear," resumed Madame d'Epenoy, seriously; "that you should hate M. Gastoul for not having had the politeness to fall in love with you, I can understand and excuse; but his wife has never injured you, yet you detest her, if possible, more than you do him. You never allow an opportunity to speak ill of her to escape you; this is at the same time malicious and impolitic; malicious, inasmuch as Madame Gastoul's conduct affords no grounds for your accusation; and impolitic, because your censure is certain to be set down to the score of jealousy."

"I jealous of that woman! Really, madame—"

"That woman, as you politely term her, is young, attractive, witty, (so report says,) and much courted in society; this alone is sufficient to excite the spite and envy of certain persons whom I will not describe. Now, what have you specifically to lay to her charge?"

"I! nothing whatever!" answered Mademoiselle du Boissier, drawing out her words affectedly; "nothing in the world, I assure you; but I doubt whether her husband can say as much."

"But this is very like a formal act of accusation. Come, my fair guardian of female morality, explain yourself. I have already heard that my son pays court to the lady in question; is it to this report that you allude? If so, conjectures, suppositions, hearsay, will not suffice; I must have facts—proofs. You have now gone too far to recede; speak then, I am ready to hear what you have to say."

"You ask me for facts and proofs," said Mademoiselle Alphonsine, gently.

"Yes—for ascertained facts and visible proofs."

"Will you promise me not to repeat to any one what I am about to tell you? If I am to speak out, I must be well assured of your discretion; for I should be very sorry to take away Madame Gastoul's reputation."

"Agreed," said Madame Epenoy, dryly; "and if you are but half as discreet on the subject as I shall be, the secret will be well kept."

"Well, then, madame," continued Mademoiselle du Boissier, lowering her voice to impart solemnity to the communication, "these are the facts and proofs, which must, I think, convince even you. I was yesterday at the private theatricals at the Hotel Castellane; Madame Gastoul was there also, and it so happened that we were seated next to each other. The heat was excessive, and several people complained of it, my neighbour more than any. Suddenly I perceived that she grew very pale, and seemed about to faint. I supported her, and, with the assistance of one or two other ladies, she was led, or rather carried, into an adjoining room. There she lost all consciousness, and whilst the others were holding smelling-bottles to her nose, and, loosening her dress, I took off her gloves in order to pat the palms of her hands. Will you believe me when ———?"

At the very crisis of her tale, Mademoiselle du Boissier was interrupted by a servant, who informed Madame d'Epenoy that the Marquis de Morsy requested to be admitted.

"You can tell me the rest by-and-bye," said the old lady; "I cannot deny myself to M. de Morsy, who has come on business, and by my own appointment."

"I will return to-morrow," answered Mademoiselle du Boissier, taking the hint, and rising immediately. "Adieu, my dear madame, I trust you will bear me no ill-will, should I have said anything to displease you."

"None in the world; but where are you going now?" said Madame d'Epenoy, who saw her turning towards the bed-room door.

"I do not wish to meet M. de Morsy in the ante-room dressed as I am; I will slip out by the back stairs."

"Why, he is fifty years old," said Madame d'Epenoy, laughing.

"That is no reason for my scaring him with this unbecoming costume."

As she uttered these words, which promised a speedy conversion to the sage maxims of her instructress, Mademoiselle du Boissier opened the bed-room door, at the very moment that the servant re-entered the drawing-room to announce M. le Marquis de Morsy.

BRANSCOMBE: A SCENE IN DEVON.

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.

EARTH is very beautiful!—the morning sun, just tipping
 Verdant cliffed Branscombe with a golden hue,
 Seemeth from its nightly sleep to come forth thirstful, sipping
 Exhalations from the streams and from the herbs fresh dew:
 Three valleys fair, in gay green hills embedded,
 A fanciful triangle, below me lie at ease;
 Near yon humble church, where cliff and combe are wedded,
 They meet like parted friends,—while skimmer thro' the trees
 Three brooklets of the mountains,
 That babble to the breeze!

Earth is very beautiful amid these steepes and valleys!—
 Golden wheat now quivers, ripening in the sun;
 Up yon hazled slope the farmer loudly rallies
 Reapers to their morning task; lo! it is begun!
 Wild flowers around their varied tints are showing—
 Sweeps of yellow charlock athwart the fields are seen;
 The scarlet hoods of poppies, mid dark green turnips glowing,
 Are brighter than the ruby gems that deck an Indian queen;
 Earth is very beautiful
 Amid these valleys green!

Bursting, like snowflakes, from the emerald hedges,
 Bindweeds profusely thrust out their petals white;
 Nightshade flowers, with centred gold and wings of purple edges,
 Mix with gay convolvuli and vetches red and bright:
 Blue blooms the succory, each bud than sapphire brighter,—
 Purple spiked wild thyme, in amethystine pride,
 Scatters aromatic scents—of bees the sweet inviter,
 While topaz-like the agrimony's columns rise beside:—
 Than BRANSCOMBE is no fairer place
 In all this world wide!

Earth is very beautiful!—The sun of mid-day, pouring
 Fervid blessings on its grow, thnow shines o'er Branscombe's vales;
 I sit and listen to the waves beneath me loudly roaring,
 And hear within the copses near no songs of nightingales:
 No! 'tis the woodland thrush, whose music, richly voicing
 Happy emotions, floats a choral flood!
 I'll hasten from the shore to list to its rejoicing,
 And in a leafy shroud me wrap, fast buried in a wood;
 Its gushing song shall be my wine,
 The wild flowers scent my food!

Branscombe, Aug. 1841.

* "*Branscombe*" implies the meadowy vale among the hills: this beautiful parish is five miles east of Sidmouth.

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE. *

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D.D.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Night Watch.

—————" Si fata fuissent
Ut caderem, meruisse manu."

THE clouds that overhang the city of London are privileged to let down one shower at least every day in the year. The clouds that float on the Italian skies are licensed to pour forth, in a few hours, as much rain as would suffice for a twelvemonth. Storms in Italy have all the suddenness and impetuosity that distinguished once, and are still said to characterize in that country, the passions of men. Huge dense clouds, in the shape of gigantic mountains, may be seen rising from every quarter of the horizon. They swell, they spread, they tower frowning and threatening aloft, they rush against each other like conflicting legions of phantoms. Darkness and silence are cast on the face of the creation. Then suddenly, as if at a given signal, the whole atmosphere is rent by blood-red flashes. Thunder and lightning hide the battling of elements from the gaze of stunned and dazzled mortals; and when the tempest is over, and they are finally enabled to recover from their bewilderment, the deluged fields, the drowned birds, the scattered foliage and shattered trees, are there to attest the violence of the storm, and justify their alarm.

There are streets at Naples, athwart which wooden bridges are thrown as across canals and torrents, and there are instances on record, when both these bridges and men, horses and carriages, have been swept away by the overwhelming *freshet*. I remember to have groped my way for nearly a quarter of an hour, completely blinded by a rapid succession of lightning that seemed to have set the whole firmament on fire. I have seen trees stripped of their foliage to the last bough, and the bare splintered old trunks smoking and smouldering as if fire had rained and not water, and the grass withered and blackened as if the lava of Vesuvius had swept over it.

Commutations of this nature, however more natural and frequent in the summer-time, will yet now and then visit our land even in the heart of winter; and the long drought which, contrary to all natural laws, had in the present instance lasted from Christmas to Midlent, prepared us for some calamitous reaction. The storm might, if it had chosen, probably have taken a more convenient opportunity than to fall upon us on our outset, unless, indeed, the tempest was intended as a sinister omen to frighten us back from our enterprise, or an ordeal of fire and water to test our warlike virtues and powers of endurance.

However this might be the case, it is certain that we marched on, in order and silence, with the steady and sullen determina-

* Continued from page 205.

tion of the Greek heroes of Homer. Before we were fairly out of town, our armour and equipment were thoroughly soaked through. The road in the country was turned into a vast canal; and as we waded through it, many a hapless wight slipped down from the foot-path and plunged headlong into the ditch. Above head, there was a pitched battle between all the angels and demons of Milton. The frequent pelting of hailstones, and the peals and flashes of heaven's red artillery, were meant, I suppose, to try how we could, in case of need, stand showers of bullets and roaring of cannon.

Manfully did we bear through it: no complaint or even murmur was heard, and the few stragglers that lagged behind, stopping at some of the frequent inns by the road-side, had no sooner swallowed their pint of wine than they overtook us, plashing and paddling through the miry water like a flock of wild geese.

Our road led straight to the hills in the direction of Montechiaro and Traversetolo; and at this last place—twelve miles from Parma—we were to encamp for the night. We had scarcely marched for two hours, and the darkness of night, hastened by louring weather, was spreading fast over the wide level country, when a loud cry of "Halt!" was thundered forth from our men in the rear.

The column halted of course, and we wondered what new incident had occasioned that interruption, when, behold! professor Pascali driving his gig along our lines, and delivering a hasty and desultory harangue as he proceeded.

Professor Pascali belonged to, and was one of the best ornaments of, our medical faculty. He was, if I mistake not, a native of Reggio, and, as such, addicted to good cheer and good company; a man with a light head and a golden heart; the most thoughtless and blithesome of doctors, the best *connoisseur* in matter of wines, and whose young and comely waiting-maid was an object of envy to half the bachelors in town.

"My friends! young gentlemen!" he exclaimed, with a lusty voice, proceeding from a pair of lungs as inaccessible to cold or dampness as his heart was unassailable by care and sorrow—"Back, back, my good friends! It is useless for you to go farther; they have provided neither beds nor supper for you. They sent you off to starve with cold and hunger abroad, while they have accomplished a counter-revolution at home."

"No supper! a counter-revolution!" vociferated the huddling multitude. "Back, back to our town! Down with the brigands! Long live our glorious revolution!"

Tumult and confusion ensued. The leaders' voices were no longer listened to; and shouting, yelling, and swearing, the disorderly mass moved backwards with a unanimous start. To call every man back to his ranks would have been found impracticable. Each of them rushed on inconsiderately, with all the speed that the weariness of our previous march and the weight of our soaked accoutrements would allow.

A few words may be necessary to acquaint our readers with what had taken place at Parma during the short absence of its revolutionary champions.

The members of our provisional government, as soon as, by a suc-

cessful stratagems, they had ridden themselves of the tumultuous youths who rebelled against reason and kicked against necessity, had resolved to carry on that darling scheme upon which their hearts were long since bent—that of saving their town from ruin.

They wished to spare us the evils and disasters of an Austrian invasion, which they thought they had not the least adequate means to resist; and they hoped to avert that calamity, by preparing the way for Maria Louisa's peaceful return, by a spontaneous re-installment of her insignia and order, by a recall of her magistrates and officers, and by delivering into her hands, and recommending to her clemency, her repentant, humbled metropolis. In accordance with these views, they had struck the tricolored standard, dismissed the few remaining companies of stationary militia, marched into the main-square a battalion of their regular troops, who had been made to resume the ducal cockade, and proclaimed that the reign of anarchy was over, inviting every good citizen to return to his duty.

Thus would these honest and well-meaning men, no less than sincere and excellent patriots, out of mistaken charity for their country, have rendered themselves guilty of high treason, and basely betrayed the trust that the suffrage of their countrymen had vested in their hands.

Let us not, however, judge their conduct with harshness and prejudice. Every rational being must be fain to admit that circumstances bore an uncommonly dark and gloomy aspect; that effectual resistance was altogether out of the question: that it was not only utterly impracticable in itself, but fraught with dangers and evils, of which it would have been difficult to foresee the extent. Neither can any one doubt but that a prompt and complete submission might incline our exiled duchess to measures of mercy and forbearance. The gratification which that lady would have experienced on seeing herself restored to those glittering apartments from which not so much as a pin had been removed, the sight of her jewelled toilet, of her golden chair, of the famous cradle of the "King of Rome," and other trinkets, which the cares of our provisional rulers had duly rubbed, dusted, and altogether kept in a state of excellent preservation, could not fail to plead the cause of the rebels in her eyes. She would feel disposed to consider the whole matter as little more than a carnival frolic, and remembering that the day was not far back in the past when she was herself at the mercy of her people, she would be fain to exercise in our behalf that "greatest and best privilege of royalty"—to forgive.

The line of conduct pursued by our government was, therefore, certainly the wisest and safest. But ought men who venture into open revolt only to think of safety, and always to follow the dictates of wisdom? Have they only homes, wives, and children to provide for? Owe they nothing to their own honour and the fair name of their country? Is man always to yield without a struggle as soon as he despairs of success? should we ever have thought of laying down our arms ere something had been achieved which might, even in our defeat, command the respect of our enemy, and call forth universal sympathy?

Alas! it is of little avail at present to speculate on eventualities which were never to be realized. Our rulers were resolved upon submission, and aware of the impossibility of persuading, they left nothing unattempted to force, their countrymen after their views.

Things had been brought to this point, when Professor Pascali, hoping to baffle their plan by our unlooked-for return, hastened on our footsteps to bring us back to the scene of those disgraceful transactions.

As we drew near town, some kind of hasty deliberation took place. The counter-revolution being by that time accomplished, we thought the brigands—by such an appellation each party designated its adversaries—the brigands would not fail to strengthen themselves against all chances of a reaction on our part, by garrisoning, barricading, and fortifying the town-gates. All our chances, therefore, lay in the speed and suddenness of our movement, by which we hoped to surprise them in the midst of their military preparations. It was unanimously resolved that town and citadel should be carried by storm, and every obstacle overcome at the point of the bayonet.

It rained meanwhile as merrily and lustily as if it never had rained. But as we arrived in sight of *Porta San Michele*, we were made aware of the inopportunity of our hostile intentions. The gate was wide open, and as we rushed in with such a confusion that rather bespoke our military ardour than discipline, our eyes were gladdened by the sight of sentinels who still wore our own tricolored badges, and our ears were greeted with the national war-cry.

The counter-revolution had been attempted and failed. Warily as their plans had been laid, our rulers little knew how to value the public spirit of the town which they had undertaken to subdue. The most fervent youths, those who had given them so much cause for uneasiness, were, indeed, absent, either having engaged in our expedition, or having, in compliance with their parents' and friends' entreaties, emigrated or absconded. But the populace, which in less than a month of loose government had been made to feel all the importance and dignity of mobocracy—that sovereign rabble, whose very existence is hardly suspected as long as it consents to sink down quietly in its courts and alleys, but whose voice is so tremendous, and its aspect so dismal, when it sallies forth from its lair—the populace remained, and could not be as easily tamed into submission as its rulers would, for its own sake, have desired.

Accustomed of late to assemble upon the square at every faint breath of novelty, it stood a silent but not passive spectator of the metamorphosis that was to transform a rebellious into a loyal, a Guelph into a Ghibeline, city. It beheld with amazement the white and red arms of Maria Louisa, which some provident person had, as it appeared, taken good care to shelter and preserve for the present opportunity, solemnly restored to their wonted places at the entrance of all the offices of state. It gazed with stupor upon those very soldiers with whom it had but yesterday fraternized over good cheer and wine at all the taverns and cellars about town, now marching upon the square with the ducal badge on their chacko, and the air of bravado and insolence on their countenance, striking the butt-end of their

muskets on the pavement, and intimating to the crowd to draw back at the peril of their shins and toes.

The descendants of these doughty burghers, who in glorious republican times could boast of having routed the whole host of the second Frederick, could stand such a treatment no longer. The mob set up its tremendous war-whoop; it flung a shower of stones upon the well-mustered soldiery, and rushing upon them with a headlong desperate plunge, it wrenched from them swords and muskets, with that same unanimity, swiftness, and ease, with that same complete success, that signalled a similar exploit on the *Piazza di Corte* during the tumults of the memorable 13th of February.

How the routed troops were able to escape the vengeance of their exasperated conquerors I am at a loss to explain. The conflict went off, however, with no greater harm than a few scratches and bruises. Soon the victorious mob turned their wrath against the rulers from whom the counter-revolutionary orders were issued. They overtook in its flight the carriage that was bearing away the members of the self-deposed provisional government, forced them respectfully but sullenly back to their palace, where they were held as prisoners, and adding to their number two other younger, bolder, and more popular individuals that were chosen on the spot, bade them sit once more at the helm of public affairs, and issue proclamations and orders, according as it pleased their mobocratic majesty to dictate.

Hence the populace went forth in various detachments to secure the town gates, the citadel, and all other important posts. It ferreted out Major Rolfi, the hapless officer who had led the battalion into the square, and who, it was asserted, had been heard to order his followers to lower their bayonets and fire against the people. They found him, they dragged him along the streets loaded with chains, and overwhelmed him with kicks and cuffs to their hearts' content. They would infallibly have destroyed him altogether, had not some of their demagogues, most probably out of charity and humanity, suggested the propriety of casting the felon into a dungeon for that night, thence to be dragged forth, and, with due form and solemnity, tried, confessed, and hanged on the morrow.

In the midst of this wild popular exultation we entered town. The victory had already been secured to our side, and all that remained for us was to try to allay the fury of the justly-incensed and flushed multitude; so that, after a short rejoicing and fraternizing with them, the jaded adventurers retired for their night's rest, giving up all projects of their intended expedition into Romagna, and carrying their disappointment and dissatisfaction, together with their hunger, thirst, and wet clothes, into the sanctuary of their respective homes.

Had things been suffered to take a different course—the reader knows how I love to dwell on remote probabilities—had the good doctor Pascali been less eager and zealous in setting out after us, before that popular farce had been drawn to a close, or had his gray mare broken one of her legs, or his gig one of its wheels, so that our march had proceeded uninterrupted that night, however soaked, however houseless and supperless we must have slept at Traversetolo, on the morrow we would have ventured across the hilly part of the Mo-

denese territory, and carved our way to Bologna, where our timely arrival, especially if backed by our regular troops and artillery, might have infused a new spirit into our wavering brethren of Romagna, and—who knows?—perhaps turned the whole aspect of things.

I had frequent occasions to talk on the subject with some of my friends, then residing at Bologna, who assured me that our movement had been announced in that town, and our arrival looked for every hour; and that nothing more effectually contributed to hasten the downfall of their hopes, than their disappointment at our non-appearance.

Providence had decreed otherwise!

The storm which had been accessory to all these momentous transactions, within as well as without the town walls, never abated till late after midnight. The morning arose calm, pure, and balmy, breathing the peace of heaven upon the ravaged and flooded land, and into the hearts of its inhabitants. No tumult of warring elements, no clash of human passions, can resist the ineffable smile of an Italian sunrise. Plunged into the deeper abyss of misery, man only needs to raise his eyes heavenward to feel sure that all mortal troubles have their beginning and end upon earth, and that evil has no power above the region of the storms. There reigned a stillness in the well-washed streets of our sunny metropolis, that neither the rioting of the loosened mob nor the terrors of threatened invasion had power to disturb. People spoke as calmly and softly in broad daylight, in busy squares and markets, as they would have done in consecrated groves silvered by the midnight moon. All the demons of hell could not have roused a popular tumult that morning; no man could have found in his heart sufficient hatred to grasp the hilt of his dagger, or look at the priming of his gun—none could have been so deeply plunged into despair as to fasten a rope round his neck for self-destruction. Those holy sunbeams were proof against human evil-mindedness or despondency. Every one was full of God and his mercy. There was a hymn in every man's eye—a thanksgiving in every man's heart. All passions were as if spell-bound in that quiet entrancement of joy.

So much for fair weather in Italy!

And when our people finally proceeded to business, it was with that same gentle and resigned calmness that pervaded the whole of creation. The conquerors of the evening appeared before the still terrified and imprisoned members of government, cap-in-hand, dignified but respectful, and entreated them to lay aside all apprehension, to pardon their roughness and storminess of the preceding day, and to resume the management of state, providing for public safety in that manner that appeared to their judgment most expedient and opportune.

Government answered by thanking and praising their conduct—protested that their orders had been either misinterpreted or violated by their executors—that whenever an opportunity should offer itself, they would give them fresh proofs of their readiness to die for their country; but that, as yet, danger was remote and uncertain. They exhorted the people, therefore, tranquilly to retire to their dwellings, to restore peace and confidence into the bosom of their alarmed families.

With this the many-headed monster, always willing to be led by the nose, was for the while satisfied. The multitude withdrew and dispersed, order was re-established, and the members of government called for their breakfast.

Major Rolfi, the only victim that popular indignation was still unwilling to release, was dragged from his dungeon at the Town Hall, and removed to a more dreary cell in the state prison at St. Elizabeth's. The sight of the trembling wretch, cowering and shrinking before the gaze of that very populace upon whom he would scornfully have trampled on the eve, had nearly rekindled the wrath of his adversaries. One of them, a law-student, by name Octavio Fichi, whose younger brother had been slightly hurt by a random shot during the *melée* of the preceding evening, now dashing madly through the crowd, and making his way up to the prisoner, dealt him with his dagger a blow that, notwithstanding the timely interference of the bystanders, crimsoned the sky-blue coat of the ill-fated major.

This was the first and last act of violence that interrupted the quiet and harmony of that blessed morning. The prisoner arrived, still safe, though not quite sound, at the place of his destination. Three young lawyers were appointed by the people to draw up his act of accusation, and whilst everything was getting ready for his trial, the offender was lost sight of and forgotten, till at the close of the revolution he was dragged from his den by the Austrians.

In such a state of things a few days were suffered to elapse. Austrian forces crowded all round the confines of our narrow territory. We had them only twelve miles from us, on the north, all along the banks of the Po: sixteen miles from our gates westward, on the Arda, and only five on the east, on the bridge of the Enza. The project of leading our forces to Romagna had been given up as impracticable ever since our first unsuccessful attempt. Francis of Este had armed the wild tribes of the Apennine into a lawless guerilla, and a march along the hills would have been more disastrous than an open onset against the Austrians on the plain.

Yet there reigned peace and tranquillity, and if not actually sanguineness, at least apathy and security; in truth, notwithstanding the flagrant breach of the non-intervention at Modena, men were still to be found willing to dwell on that baneful delusion. With all the blind dotage of a stale erudition, they resorted to the memorials of feudal times to prove how the Austrians were perfectly right to meddle with the affairs of Modena, that duchy having in all times been considered as an imperial fief, while they could by no means extend the same authority either on the papal states or on the duchy of Parma, which had ever been in the gift of the church. They forgot that not only such feudal dependencies, but even the dignity, name, and the very shadow of the Roman or German empire, had long since ceased to exist—that Austria had solemnly, though only nominally, renounced all sovereignty over the so-called independent Italian states, both in 1745 and 1814, and that if she availed herself of the right of the strongest to come to the aid of her ally of Modena, she would have little scruple equally to re-enthroned the duchess of Parma, and march to the rescue of the pope.

All men, however, were no longer the dupes of the specious arguments of the non-intervention. But all stood equally silent; either being aware that the opportunity had been suffered to escape, and that it was now too late to come to any decisive resolution, or feeling that public spirit had too suddenly died off, to expect that any bold measure might be manfully seconded.

Hence all mutual confidence, disinterestedness, and devotedness, was at an end. Egotism, which, in the first ebullition of revolutionary success, had been laid asleep, now resumed its wonted ascendancy. It was "every one for himself, and God for us all."

"E allor siam giunti a disperar salute
Quando spera ciascun di campo solo!"

Many of the most active and ardent retired in disgust and despondency; some to the quiet and solitude of their country-seats, others asked for passports to Piedmont, where they were sure, they said, to meet the French armies hastening forward in vindication of the non-intervention. The streets became silent and solitary. The national guard slackened in their zeal and diligence—in short, the enemy had only to show himself to be sure of success.

On the evening of Saturday, the 12th of March, 1831, I was seated on a sofa by the side of Marina, in the drawing-room of Judge Cornaro, in that very room, and on that same sofa, where at that hour, without the interference of extraordinary causes, I was invariably sure to be found. The judge and three of his friends were busy at their rubber. Mary Ann was throwing her arms round her mother's neck for a parting kiss, previous to her going to bed, when cries of "To arms! to arms!" were heard at some distance. I jumped up, pressed Marina's hand, received from Mary Ann the kiss that was intended for her mother, and in a few seconds I was out in the street.

The whole town was in arms—for the last time in arms. People were drawing in various groups to the square. The cause of alarm was soon known. A young militiaman, out of breath, and minus his hat, was bawling out a few words to the gaping multitude. He came, he said, from the bridge of the Enza, where he was stationed with twenty others at the outposts. The Austrians had fallen upon and murdered their sentinel, and taken their quarters by surprise. They were in full march against Parma. He had heard their measured tramp close to his heels all along his precipitate retreat. They must be by this time at the gate.

"To the gate!—to the gate!" cried the people; "we will all die on the gate of our city!"

Hence they started: wide and broad as the *Strada San Michele* was, it could hardly be a sufficient outlet for the swelling throng. The *Porta San Michele* was only secured by an iron railing, after the style of the Parisian *barrières*. Two sentinels on duty paced up and down before it with great composure and stateliness; all otherwise was dark, deserted, and silent. The people invaded the vast avenue, and hurried up the broad flight of stairs leading to the high bastions which flanked the gate on both sides. There was a deep, universal silence—not a footstep was heard, not a bayonet was

seen gleaming through the gloom of night. They looked at each other mystified and perplexed.

"It was a false alarm! where is Rotti, the raven of the evil news? We owe him a ducking for the fool's errand he has sent us upon!"

With these words, and other worse jokes, the crowd prepared to disperse.

"One moment—yet one moment, my friends!" cried I to some of the bystanders. "It may be a false report, and there is perhaps no danger to apprehend. Still there can be no harm in doubling the guard at the gate—in sending our patrols round the circuit of the walls."

The proposal was acceded to. Volunteers stepped forward from every part. I was by acclamation appointed commanding officer at the gate, and empowered to select my men. Other companies were drawn up for other purposes, and the rest of the crowd retired.

As soon as silence and quiet was restored, I got a broadsword that lay in the guard-room, called out and mustered my forty companions, and delivered an appropriate exhortation.

"Li miei compagni feci io sì acuti,
Per questa orazion picciola ch'io feci
Che appena poscia gli avrei ritenuti."

Hence I proceeded to give the opportune instructions for the night. The night was darker than I ever remember to have seen before or afterwards, and ears were of greater service than the keenest eyes. I ordered the lamps to be put out, as only serving, to expose us without aiding our sight. I sent for refreshments and wine from the nearest tavern, and thereby restored the strength of my champions, as by my words I had raised their spirits and strengthened their virtue.

Good, hearty young fellows! They all belonged to the labouring classes, and were perfectly unknown to me. But my name and person were familiar to them, and they relied upon my discernment and steadiness with unlimited confidence. Good young fellows! I might have led them against millions!

The gate was, as I said, only protected by an iron railing, and looked rather like a toll-gate, or the fence of a garden, than the entrance to a fortified town. All along the main avenue there rose two spacious *trottoirs*, or side-walks, and these were terminated by smaller iron doors, usually opened during night-time for the admittance of travellers on foot. On each side the gate was protected by the lofty bastions and the guard-rooms; custom and other offices were excavated into the very earth of the bulwarks. These bastions, which were now converted into a public promenade, might, indeed, if well lined with artillery, have offered a serious resistance. But cannons there were none, and the walls, at no great distance, were in such a state of dilapidation, that horses might almost have climbed them. Under such circumstances, it was obvious that the best chances of opposing the enemies, if any were indeed advancing, would have been to meet them on the field. No man, since the death of our quixotic hero Octavio Farnese, ever thought of making a fortress either of Parma or of its dismantled citadel.

Outside, the road spread straight across the open meadow-land, wide and spacious enough to admit more than ten carriages abreast. At half a mile distance the sight was partly confined by a triumphal arch erected—I never knew in what epoch or for what solemnity. Before it came to the arch, the road was crossed by two branch-roads, leading the one northward to Brescello and the Po, the other towards the south, to Traversetolo and the Apennine. As far as eye could reach, the plain extended in all directions, without a house or a tree, clear and smooth as a billiard-table.

Yet chance had placed at the command of that gate a man the least willing to admit an invader; and as I grasped the hilt of my sword, I felt my heart agitated by a conflict of passions, acknowledging the irrationality of a serious resistance, yet dangerously inclined to jeopardise my life no less than that of my companions, no less than the safety of all.

My brothers in arms shared my enthusiasm, and God knows that nothing would have been easier than to rouse a thousand like them from their treacherous slumbers, who would never have suffered the Austrians to advance without trampling on heaps of their devoted bodies.

Meanwhile we had stood watching and waiting. Two of my young volunteers had been stationed on the bastions; another threw himself on the cold pavement to catch even the faintest sound. He had not been long in that posture, when up he started, and with a sudden movement he clapped his hands and cried out,

“Hark! a footstep!”

And a footstep, to be sure, it was: the sound became audible, though only at intervals, waving to and fro, according to the ebbing and flowing of the still lazy atmosphere; for a moment we might have confounded it with the beating of our anxious hearts, but by degrees it became more and more distinct. It sounded on the well-macadamized road like the distant sound of a muffled drum. It was some one running towards the gate.

“Chi va là?” cried our man from the bastion.

“Amici!” shouted back the poor fellow, who was not well sure whether the national watchword, “Italia e libertà” was any longer safe, and, on his drawing up to the foot-path door, we recognized one of our militiamen at the outposts.

The door was opened for his admittance. He told his sorrowful tale, and had leave to go home.

The tidings he brought confirmed my worst apprehensions. The Hungarians had indeed crossed the Enza, and lost no time in advancing against us.

Presently my man on the ground jumped on his feet.

“Hark! the tramp of horses!”

And horses, no doubt, were coming. They might be heard at several miles’ distance. They came from the north, from the road of Brescello. On they dashed at full gallop, like a charging squadron, and we could plainly discern the clash of dangling scabbards.

“Hungarians, by heaven!” I exclaimed. “My friends, look to your guns.”

The young fellows cocked their muskets, and laid their muzzles on the bars of the iron railing.

"Chi va là?" roared our stentor from the top of the bastion, as the galloping cavalry issued into the main road at about a quarter of a mile from the gate. The horsemen halted. One of them rode forward alone.

"Open, for heaven's sake!" he cried, in a husky voice, as a man who had ridden himself out of breath; "we are dragoons and national cavalry from the outposts at the Po; a squadron of Hungarians are riding close after us."

The gate was thrown open. The horsemen (four only in number, notwithstanding all their noise) were hastily admitted. Still no Austrians were heard, either on horseback or foot. Presently our long-eared scout stood up amongst us.

"Hark! carriage-wheels!"

"Impossible!" we all replied; "they must be the wheels of artillery."

But no: the sound drew near, too light and easy to be mistaken for the heavy rolling of a piece of ordnance. The advancing conveyance is descried winding its way to the gate, dark and ghost-like, like the chariot of Hecate.

"Alto là! chi va là?" shouts our sentry on the bastion. The carriage stops—a man alights, and walks up to the little door.

"For mercy's sake, let us in for a few minutes," he said; "the countess Stabili has been suddenly taken ill at her villa, and sends in great haste for Doctor Rossi" (the ablest accoucheur in town.)

"The countess Stabili should have chosen a more auspicious night for her confinement," I replied, as I opened the door with my own hands. Then suddenly drawing my sword, and seizing the fellow by the throat, till his eyes started from their sockets, "you rascally traitor," cried I, "you are no better than an Austrian spy."

The countess Stabili was one of Maria Louisa's ladies of the bed-chamber, and I was, perhaps, not wrong in my conjecture that the Austrians had resorted to that stratagem to ascertain what resistance they were likely to meet with. Moreover, that night I acted after the impulse of the moment, and instinct served me instead of reflection.

"You wretch, you brigand! you scoundrel," I continued, warming as I spoke; "were I to cut your throat on the spot, you would have only what you deserve. But I will not stain my hands in your cowardly blood. Here, my friends, pinion his arms as fast as a Bologna sausage; shut him up in the *cachot* of the guard-room. To-morrow at sunrise we will have him hung up on the battlements of yonder bastion."

It was no sooner said than done. The man, astounded by my brusque reception, offered no resistance, and was led out. The carriage waited for his return for about half an hour, then slowly drove off.

In like manner others of our luckless sentinels at the outposts arrived, and were safely housed. They all had left the Austrians at the distance of four—three—two miles, yet no Austrians appeared.

About midnight, however, our people were nearly all in: the road became more deserted, and nothing interrupted the stillness of our watch.

I took advantage of this interval of truce, appointed a lieutenant that was to command in my stead, gave orders that no man should be admitted during my absence, and, promising to be back in less than half an hour, I walked to the palace of government; our rulers—I owe them this justice—were at their post. I found them seated in that same cabinet where I had already repeatedly stood before them, and almost always as a bearer of evil news. They appeared to be busy destroying heaps of state papers that lay in mighty confusion on their table.

"My lords, they are coming!"

They hung down their heads, and answered not.

"The Austrians are coming, my lords!" I repeated, "what are your lordships pleased to order?"

"To order, my son?" answered Da Costa, with an accent of bitter consternation. "If the Austrians are indeed advancing, it belongs to them henceforth to dictate."

"Think again, sir," I replied. "Would you wish to let them in at this hour of night, that they might take advantage of darkness and confusion to pillage the town?"

"My dear De Negri, have we power to prevent them from getting in at any hour they please?"

"I know not that. I see that, notwithstanding their numbers, they are overawed by our show of defence, and dare not to follow up their advantage."

"Heaven be praised for that!" said Da Costa. "We shall have leisure to destroy these fatal documents, that might otherwise be brought forward as an evidence against us, and against the best of you. Farewell, my brave youth," continued the old man, rising from his seat and laying his hand on my shoulder. "Lose no time in absconding, or otherwise providing for thy safety. They will be sure to search for thee. Heaven protect thee!"

"Amen, my lord," I coolly replied; "but I am wanted at the gate, where I am *capo-posto*, and cannot let my comrades perish without me. Once more, my lords, I ask for your orders."

"Well, then, sir!" exclaimed Count Carmagnola with his wonted pride, "withdraw your men from the gate, and bid them disperse."

"They would not obey, my lord; no more would I. Such orders are inconsistent with the honour of a soldier. As long as the last of us breathes, the Austrians enter not. If it is your mind to surrender, do it yourselves. We are placed there to fight, and not to capitulate."

"Alas, poor De Negri!" interposed Da Costa, "fighting and treating are equally out of the question with us. Were we to send our messenger, the Austrians would shoot him as a brigand ere he opened his mouth. Believe me, our safety lies in a prompt, unconditional submission. Give the enemy even the slightest pretext—fire only one gun, and our town will be a heap of ruins."

"Nay, if our case be so desperate, *extremis malis extrema remedia*. Wake up all the national guards, and ring the alarm-bell."

"Madman!" again cried Carmagnola. "You are young—have you no mother or sisters?"

I stood silent. Mother I indeed had none: but my poor three sisters, and another purer, and to me dearer being, were now, perhaps, slumbering in happy security, who within a few hours might awake among the horrors of a plundered city. I shuddered, but answered calmly—

“I will go and call up a few of my friends. I must see what they think on the subject.”

Having said this, I left them. I made my way towards the *Strada Santa Lucia*, and was soon near home. I stopped not at my door, but at the house opposite, and knocked lustily.

“Who is there?” cried a female voice from the attics.

“Pippo Galli!” I exclaimed. “Call up Pippo. Tell him De Negri wants him.”

“Signor Pippo is not in, sir,” cried the housemaid, “nor has been in all night.”

I walked on: not many steps from that was the house of Count Berardi. There I repeated my summons.

“What is the matter?” bawled out the count himself, who had just risen from bed.

“Dress up in haste, and come out, count—the Austrians are at our gates.”

“The Austrians be d—d,” replied the rude man; “it was all a false alarm. Go to bed and be d—d to you.”

So saying he closed the window. I continued hammering without mercy, and calling out with all the might of my lungs, in vain. The count, I afterwards learned, had been at the tavern with his boon companions till late, and had been carried home dead drunk.

“For the sake of humanity,” cried a piteous voice from an adjoining window, “cease your infernal noise. My poor wife is on her deathbed, and you will scare her passing soul from her body.”

I dropped the knocker, and walked grumbling away.

“There is no use in losing time from door to door,” thought I: “let us see what the alarm-bell will do.”

I walked to the *Duomo*, and stood before the oaken door of the huge square *Campanile*. The door had no knocker, but I shook it with right good will. No one answered my summons, and I was about to give up in despair, under the impression that the tower was uninhabited, when a tasselled nightcap and the well-known cadaverous face of the sexton and bell-ringer, peeped out at the loopholes.

“Fire, fire, *Campanaro!* *Campana a martello.* Toll your biggest bell for your life.”

“But, your honour, I see no fire. Pray your honour, whereabouts is the fire?”

“Ring all the bells in your belfry, you lazy dog, or I’ll wring your ears off your head.”

“Softly, dear sir,” quoth the man with a provoking coolness; “I may ring no bells, you know, without an order from the sacristan.”

“And where the devil is the sacristan?”

“He is sleeping with his housemaid, near San Benedetto, at the other end of the town.”

"Devils and furies!" I cried in a towering rage, grasping one of my pistols, and aiming it at the night-capped head. "Toll your bells, or I'll shatter your brains."

Head, nightcap, and tassel, immediately disappeared.

"Toll, campanaro, in God's name, toll, or I'll set fire to the tower and burn you, you old owl, in your nest."

No answer; threats and entreaties were equally wasted. The fellow felt safe in his fortress, and laughed at my impotent fury.

Believe it who may, the thought that there were other steeples and other bells never crossed my mind. I gave up all hopes of rousing the town to arms, and returned in a state of distraction to my friends at the gate. I found my friends safe at their post, where during my absence they had suffered no interruption. No incident of importance occurred till day-break.

The night had been dry, but slightly overcast, and the thin haze that almost imperceivable had rested on our atmosphere, was gradually drifted off by the first break of the morning breeze. A few white streaks of dawning light, in the shape of thin and faint comet trains, gradually dispelled the darkness of night, and enabled us to descry a huge dense mass slowly and silently moving towards us. The first alarm being given by our sentinels, we all rushed to arms. My men were drawn up in a line along the wall of the bulwark, that afforded them at least a precarious protection, but I stood alone in the midst of the road with drawn sword, close to the iron rails.

No sooner had the large phalanx caught the first sight of us, just as it issued from under the triumphal arch above mentioned, than it halted and stood immovable. Their ranks could be no less than fifty abreast, and they stood close to each other with that perfect order and steadiness for which German soldiers are justly celebrated.

They stood immovable—and as I gazed upon them with wonder and awe, I could not help wishing that a couple of our howitzers were levelled against them on the bastions, and that a few scores of our young *tirailleurs* were by my side, so that, be the consequences what they might, we could, at least, before we yielded, have the satisfaction of seeing a few of them writhing and sprawling in the dust.

But our cannons were resting on the square of the citadel, and our friends sleeping in their beds.

The hostile mass continued to stand still for about a quarter of an hour, during which darkness gave way before the glorious light of morn.

At last they came to a decisive resolution. The Tyrolese sharpshooters were ordered to advance.

Forward they came, spreading in a broad line over the whole extent of the meadows with a mind to give the escalade, while only four of them, most probably forlorn hopes, marched slowly but fearlessly on the main road.

They had not proceeded many rods when they lowered their rifles and levelled them to my breast.

Then, I confess, and only for the first time during that eventful night, I felt my mouth bitter, and a shiver ran through my bones.

There was no mistaking the cowardly sensation. It was as nearly akin to fear as any human feeling could well be. I had heard a great deal about the unerring aim of a Tyrolese rifle, and I felt that, had I had four lives, I stood on the brink of eternity.

Yet, God is my witness, I stirred not, shrank not. I gazed steadfastly on the deadly muzzles, waiting almost with impatience that they should pour forth my death-warrant.

Don Quixote, awaiting the spring of the royal lion at the door of his cage, was only a faint image of my vain foolhardiness, as I stood erect before the closed gate, my countenance beaming, and my naked blade gleaming in the morning ray.

"Sir, sir, shall I fire?" whispered my sentinel on the bastion with admirable coolness.

"God forbid!" I hastily replied, envying in my heart the intrepidity of that rare fellow, who would not have hesitated to set fire to a mine that would have blown up him and all of us in a few seconds.

And yet what was to be done? Waste the few lives of my companions and my own, with the certainty that the most dire calamities to our town would be the consequence of my rashness? Yield, and take to our heels after that vain bravado, and cover my name with ignominy? I felt that I had carried the joke too far, and that it was impossible to withdraw, both with honour and life.

In this emergency I had no better wish than that the Tyrolese should take a good aim and free me from perplexity. But the Tyrolese seemed seized with a similar irresolution—at the distance of perhaps fifty yards they stopped. Perhaps they felt that, few and helpless as we were, we were yet too many for them. Perhaps, notwithstanding their venturesome character, they stood in some panic-dread of an ambuscade. Perhaps they wished to give time to their comrades to climb the dismantled walls, and harass us in our rear. Perhaps, also, finally, they felt some reluctance to murder a man, apparently a madman, in cold blood.

The fact is, they stopped, and stood always with their pieces steadily turned against me, whilst my faithful sentinels on the bastions equally levelled their muskets against them, and the huge mass of the Austrians was seen moving forward at a slow and menacing pace.

Things were in this state, when new characters made their appearance on the stage.

RESPONSE TO MRS. ABDY'S "WHO LOVES THE GIFTED?"

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

"Who loves the gifted?"—They, the gifted too!
In this, our classic region, not a few.
Methinks I see Apollo's glorious band,
By amity link'd cordial hand in hand,
A mighty phalanx, marshall'd in array
To chase chaotic ignorance away,
Having quaff'd deeply the Pierian spring
That taught of old the sons of Greece to sing.
Hath not each child of Genius a claim
On thee, thou gifted one! long dear to fame?
Thou feel'st no envy;—other poets' lays
Partake with thine an equal meed of praise!
O, all must love them, for they do impart
The dearest lessons to the froward heart,
Making it gracious, pitiful, humane,
Prompt to assuage, but ne'er inflict a pain,
And raise the base to the high pinnacle
From which, with porcine dulness, late they fell.
Who loves thee not?—O! not one heart that knows
The tenderness with which thine own o'erflows,
But must adore thee—thou! so womanly
In all thy chaste and winning minstrelsy!

Let not thy sweet muse sing so sad a strain,
That they, the gifted, are but born to pain!
What! shall the holiest boon God can bestow
Warm, like a foster'd adder, for their woe?—
The spark ethereal—the ray divine—
Kindled in heaven, on earth serene to shine,
Be but a fierce, a meteoric glare,
To light its fever'd victims to despair?
No! it shall glow a pure empyrean flame,
Unclouded, unextinguish'd, fed by Fame,
(As virgins feed those lamps on Vesta's fane
That know no dimness, that *must* know no wane,)
While radiations from that sacred fire
Shall 'lumine those now struggling to aspire
To the Parnassian height, whose devious way
Demands indeed such strong, unflickering ray.
Yet thou, who hast the topmost summit gain'd,
(Forgotten *now* each weary step that pain'd,)
Must be elate to join the sons of song,
And share the glories that to them belong;
Marking the chroniclers who *never* lie,
Writing their records for posterity;
Numb'ring the poets, as the tribes of old
Number'd the chosen, by the angel told,
On their bright foreheads setting God's own seal,
That all their glorious destiny should feel.—
Upon the Poet's brow that seal shall shine—
It stamp'd a Hemans', Landon's, and shall *thine*!

TALES OF THE PUMP-ROOM. No. IV.

OTHELLO.

THE theatre was filled to overflowing: a newly-engaged singer played Don Giovanni. The pit, seen from above, looked in its heaving motion like an unquiet sea; while the gay scarfs and feathers of the ladies glanced like gold and silver fishes amid the darkling ocean. The front boxes were gayer than usual, as a brief court mourning, which had cast its shadow over the early part of the winter, was just over; and this evening rich turbans, gay plumes, and many coloured shawls for the first time again appeared.

Brilliant, however, as was the *coup d'œil* afforded by the whole dress circle, the crowning gem in this diadem of beauty was unquestionably the happy combination of dignity and loveliness, which, from the grand ducal box, cast pleased and friendly glances over the bright world around and beneath. The gazer felt constrained to wish that fair young creature had been less highly born; so far more fitted to inspire love than distant veneration, did the blooming cheek and open brow, mild eye, sweet mouth, and almost childish expression appear. And, strange to say, as if not only cognizant of, but a sharer in the treasonable wish, the very dress of the Princess Sophia harmonized with this picture of innocent natural loveliness—so completely had she resigned to the bright bevy of ladies around every semblance of superfluous ornament.

"How full of life! how happy she does seem!" exclaimed a stranger in one of the first tier of boxes to the Russian envoy, who stood behind him with his opera glass fixed on the princess; "when she smiles, and drops her speaking eye for a moment, and then looks up with such an indescribably winning expression—and when she flourishes with such graceful elegance that pretty little hand, do you not feel as if hearing, even at this distance, her playful questions and original remarks?"

"'Tis wonderful," was the not very pertinent reply of the ambassador.

"And yet," continued the stranger, turning for elucidation to the envoy's lady, "this beaming sunshine is, you say, no more than a mask; and she who wears it a prey to bitter anguish—a victim—surely a gay and blooming one—to unhappy love. Do, my dear madam, confess that you are only trying to mystify me, to enhance the interest I cannot help taking in that heavenly young creature."

"Mon Dieu, baron," exclaimed the lady, shaking her head reproachfully, "are you yet unconvinced? Honour bright, all is exactly as I have told you; she loves, and beneath her station. I have it from a lady whom nothing of the kind escapes. And why should it

surprise you that a princess, trained from her childhood to representation, should have tact sufficient to blind the world to so unbecoming a flirtation?"

"I cannot fathom it," muttered the stranger, musingly to himself; "I cannot put it together! such gaiety, such apparently unforced joyousness, with a secret, unfortunately-placed attachment! indeed, my good madam, I cannot comprehend it."

"But why should she not be cheerful, baron? she little dreams that her uncourtly predilection is known to a single human being—her lover, too, is near."

"Her lover near! for pity's sake, madam, point me out the happy man."

"What an indecent request!" exclaimed the ambassadress—"even if the lady of the bedchamber had not sworn me to secrecy. No, no, friend—you may feel tempted to repeat in Warsaw what you have seen and heard here—so no names, if you please. To mention names in such affairs is always dangerous—and nothing annoys my husband half so much."

The overture drew near to its close; the tones of the orchestra waxed louder in proportion, and the eyes of the spectators were riveted—to have a peep at the new Don Juan—on the stage. But the stranger in the box of the Russian embassy had neither ear for Mozart, nor glance for the new performer; he saw only the beautiful scion of royalty, in whose speaking eyes and sweetly parted lips he sought, with ever-deepening interest, to read the history of her clandestine attachment. Her female companions, young and old, had ceased their conversation, and were absorbed in the music; but Sophia's eyes were turned from the stage, and explored with searching gaze the crowded house for some well-known but missing object.

"That gaze is for her lover," mused the now silent stranger. "How simply it trails along the lines of upturned faces, till, resting on one beloved and privileged being, it can convey to him, and him alone, with the freemasonry of love, a thousand kind and tender greetings!" Just then, a beautiful blush flitted across Sophia's countenance! her chair was hastily pushed back—her head turned with feigned carelessness towards the box-door. It opened, and a tall, splendid looking young man entered, and paid his compliments to the grand duchess, the mother of the youthful princess. Her daughter played, as if unconscious, with the eye-glass in her hand; but the stranger needed no prophet to inform him that he saw before him the happy man.

The face was as yet turned from him; but the figure and air of the young man struck him as already familiar. The elder princess seemed to have addressed a remark to her daughter, whose reply, to judge from the bright smile which accompanied it, and the laughter which it occasioned, must have had in it something piquant. The young man turned suddenly round, and "Heavens! Count Zroniefsky!" exclaimed the stranger, so loud and anxiously, that the ambassador was frightened from his proprieties, and his wife, sharing his alarm, seized her guest unconsciously by the arm, and dragged him down on his seat.

"For God's sake keep quiet, or we shall have a scene!" whispered

the lady indignantly ; " the people right and left of us are all staring, and but for the fortunate screeching just then of the trumpets and French horns right below us, all the world must have heard you name Zroniefsky. What can be your tie to the count ? You *must* know that we avoid his acquaintance."

" How can I be aware," rejoined the stranger, " whom you honour or not with your acquaintance, seeing I have not been more than three hours in the town ? But why have you put your ban on the person in question ?"

" Of his footing with our government you surely cannot be ignorant," said the ambassador. " He is a marked man, and you may judge how annoying it is to me to have him for ever here. He has had the effrontery to get himself presented at court, so that we are always meeting, while circumstances require that we should remain strangers to each other. This is awkward enough ; but, to mend the matter, I am desired from head-quarters to find out how he manages to live in such style, when his estates are all confiscated, and I have no clue whatever to assist me. You are acquainted with him, baron ?"

The stranger lost the greater part of this diplomatic communication, for his eyes and mind were fixed on the ducal box, watching how, during his chit-chat with the duchess and her ladies, the speaking glances of Zroniefsky held converse with the reciprocally-expressive ones of the beautiful creature beside him. The curtain suddenly rose, the count left the box, and the stranger could hear and reply to the reiterated whisper of the envoy—

" You are acquainted, I believe, with this count ?"

" I served with him in the Polish lancers."

" Ah, true ! he was once attached to the French army. Did you see much of him ? are you aware of his resources ?"

" I saw little of him," replied the stranger, " except when we were brought together in the field, and know nothing about him except that he is a brave soldier and most capital officer."

The envoy either was satisfied with what he heard, or unwilling to commit himself by further inquiries ; so the conversation dropped, and his guest seemed absorbed in the business of the stage. His thoughts were, however, very differently occupied, and the fate of his poor friend—for such had Zroniefsky, while comrades in arms, really been—painfully engrossed his mind. " So fortune has not yet done alternately luring and disappointing him ! Poor fellow ! As a mere boy he fought for freedom with Kosciusko, and freedom and Kosciusko have long since found a common grave ! In youth glory was his idol, but the eagles in whose wake he so proudly followed, lie soiled in the dust ; and now love, from whose wiles a sterner mistress long preserved him, has stolen upon his manhood, and placed his fatal prize so high, that he must either resign it or perish !"

It was from a reverie which not all the tumult of applause at the conclusion of the act could dispel, that the envoy sought, two or three times, in vain, to rouse his guest, by telling him that the grand duchess had inquired about him, professing herself acquainted with some branch or other of his family, and that the inquiry must be followed up by his immediate presentation.

The stranger felt himself blush; his heart beat, it would have puzzled him to tell why, and it was not till he had followed the envoy through the corridor to the very threshold of the royal box, that he could ascribe the unwonted flutter in his quickened pulse to its true cause—viz. the joy with which he hailed an introduction to the bright being in whose secret he now felt a double interest.

The grand duchess received the stranger with marked urbanity. She herself presented him to her daughter, and the name of Larun seemed not altogether unfamiliar to the fair creature's ear; who indeed said, with a slight blush, she had surely heard of his services in the French army. Now the baron knew full well, that from Zroniefsky alone could she have had the information; and that it came from no less favoured source he felt further assured, from the privileges of old acquaintanceship, with which he seemed at once invested, and the friendly ease with which he was admitted as a party to the ensuing conversation.

"My daughter has suggested," said the grand duchess, "that as a stranger within these walls, and consequently perfectly unbiassed, you might be an impartial arbiter on a point we have been discussing. Can there not, do you think, exist in nature hidden agencies, which—which—I hardly know how to express it)—when we recklessly and unnecessarily set them in motion, are capable of bringing evil on our heads?"

"Nay, mother!" cried the princess playfully, "how can the baron be an unbiassed judge, when your very first words so decidedly beg the question? But from your solemn opening he will now guess that the matter in dispute between us is an opera; so I must explain. Now, sir, this opera is, take it all in all, perhaps the most perfect and delightful I know; and having had the good fortune to hear it on a foreign stage, my first wish on returning home was that it might be got up here immediately. But, would you believe it? I can never have my wish gratified. Not that actors are wanting, or the music too difficult—but—really the reason is too childish to tell!"

"May I ask the name of the opera?" said the stranger.

"O yes—it is Othello."

"Othello! a noble work of art indeed! It is not often that such soul-speaking music finds its way to the heart; and that must be a callous one on which the swanlike dirge of Desdemona fails to leave a deep and lasting impress of melancholy."

"Do you hear that?" exclaimed the eager girl—"this gentleman comes from Petersburg, from Warsaw and Berlin—and yet thinks as highly as I do of Othello. He has heard it often—I once only, and am never again to have the satisfaction—and for what?—a nursery tale which no one now would give ear to."

"Do not talk thus," said the duchess seriously, "there are facts connected with this history which make me shudder even to think of them. But we are speaking to our arbiter in enigmas. Suppose, sir, that every time Othello was represented here, a fire took place, and say if it would not seem a coincidence more than ordinary."

"What a supposition, mother!" interrupted the princess, laughing—"a madder one even than the legend!"

"Five will suffice for my purpose, and five it shall be—for the present," said the mother as solemnly as before. "Well then—Othello was first brought forward, as a drama from Shakspeare, some fifty years ago—a certain event ensued—a conflagration for instance, we have called it, took place. The thing was considered ominous, and for long no attempt to revive the piece was made; but a new and more able translation appeared—it became popular, was acted, and the event was signalized, as before, by a fire. I remember (my daughter does not) when Othello, first travestied as an opera, came out among us, and how we laughed to think the sorrows of the Moor should evaporate in song. But Desdemona did not fall unavenged—the grave yawned for another and other victim. The event—the fire I mean) again and closely followed; and since then Othello has been a proscribed piece here. The thing, baron, seems foolish, but it is *true*. Now what say you of it, and how do you decide in our controversy?"

"In favour of your royal highness," replied Larun, in a tone half between jest and earnest; "and if you will permit me, I can corroborate my verdict by an example from my own knowledge. I had once an old maiden aunt, a disagreeable mysterious sort of person, whom we children had nicknamed aunt Feathers, because she always wore great dangling black plumes in her bonnet. Just as with your Othello—a notion prevailed in our family that whenever aunt Feathers came to see us, some one or other was sure to be sick. The idea, your highnesses may believe, gave rise to abundance of scoffing and laughter, but the illnesses came in spite of them all; and we got so accustomed to the thing, that no sooner were aunt Feathers' black plumes seen nodding in the entry, than old nurse began to make the gruel, and the errand-boy was kept mounted to go for the doctor."

"A capital figure, your aunt Feathers," cried the princess laughing heartily—"how well I can fancy her putting her head out of the carriage-window, and at the very sight of it children scampering as from the plague, and older people looking as wise and solemn as they do here now when any one names Othello!"

"Hush, hush!" once more interrupted the duchess, annoyed, if not angrily. "People should not talk so lightly of what none can gainsay—at least I know it is thus with my part of the story; and therefore," added she, relaxing into a smile, "I fear, baron, that even by your own verdict in my favour, you are condemned to live without Othello till you can see it on other boards."

"You shall see it here though yet," whispered Sophia, with something of childish and self-willed energy—"I must have my darling Desdemona's song sung as it should be, on the stage, even should I myself be the devoted victim!"

"Yourself!" exclaimed the stranger, shocked and surprised. "I thought the ghost of the Moor boded not death, but conflagration."

"That was my mother's substitute," replied, in a still lower whisper, the momentarily sobered daughter. "There is far more both of horror and of danger in the legend!"

The leader of the orchestra gave his well-known signal, the music

struck up, and, dismissed with the most gracious of bows, the baron had left the royal box, and was seeking in vain, in the passage, for his guide the envoy, when the warm pressure of a hand made him loook up and recognize Count Zroniefsky.

"So my eyes did not deceive me!" cried the count. "It is my own, my gallant major. How the sight of you revives all the part with me, and blots out the very existence of the last thirteen unlucky years! I feel once more a jolly lancer of the guard.—Vive Poniatowsky—vive L'Emp . . ."

"In God's name, count, remember where you are," said his friend. "And why invoke at so much risk those long-vanished shadows? Let the dead rest, they have had their day."

"Rest!" rejoined the other, "that is precisely what I cannot do. O that I were numbered with the dead! How softly, how soundly, would I then sleep, like my brave Poles, whom no voice—not *his*—would now wake up again! Why am I alone of all denied rest?"

As he spoke, the red, unnatural glare of fever was in the once bright eye of the handsome speaker, and his pale and compressed lip told of secret anguish. His friend saw before him, with fanciful interest, no longer the joyous youthful hero he had often beheld at the head of his regiment on a day of victory. The confiding and winning smile, that once was his peculiar charm, had given place to a sterner expression—the eyes that, in manly confidence and all the fearless pride of youth, once freely met the gaze, had assumed a searching distrustful cast; the sickly red which lingered on the cheek seemed but the faded remnant of that youthful bloom which had gained for him, in the salons of Paris, the title of the handsome Pole; and yet, spite of these manifold and painful changes, the work of time and misfortune, enough remained to excuse if not justify the princess's predilection.

"You look hard at me, major," was his remark, after a short silence, "as though you would detect in my altered features the friend of other days. You may spare yourself the useless trouble—if times change, men will change with them!"

"You are not so greatly changed," answered the baron, "but that I recognized you at the first glance. What I miss, and would fain yet find, is the confiding expression of former and better days. Alexander Zroniefsky seems to me to have lost his faith in mankind, and yet," added he smiling, "disguise it from others as he may, I am no stranger to the most secret thoughts of his heart."

"Poor heart!" exclaimed the count with a sigh; "I sometimes doubt if I have a heart, were it not for its uneasy beating. What thought can you have detected there, save unalterable friendship for yourself, major? If my eye has lost its fire, the warmth lies hid within; the grasp of my hand might have proved to you that I am still the old man."

"Thanks—but to prove to you also that your heart's riddle is not unread—what has a princely maiden said or done that it should beat uneasily?"

The count grew deadly pale; he pressed the stranger's hand convulsively. "For God's sake, no more of this. I know—I understand

too well what you mean ; nay, to you, I may even admit its truth ; though to bid you keep my secret as the grave, were to insult an old comrade of the Tenth. Did ever one of them betray a friend ?”

“None—but what if their comrade should betray himself ?”

“Come this way—up this private stair,” whispered the count—“there are people coming. In heaven’s name, does any soul on earth except yourself suspect ?”

“Make a clean breast, and the confession shall be mutual,” answered the baron.

“Rack me no longer, major, I implore you ; I promise to tell you all you wish, if you will but say that you alone have detected me.”

The major could no longer keep his old comrade in suspense, but briefly narrated his late arrival in the town, his having been carried, while his despatches were preparing, by the envoy to the opera ; and thus while lost in evident admiration of the youthful princess, a whisper from the envoy’s lady had conveyed to him the tidings of her misplaced affections. “You had but to appear in the ducal box,” added he, “when one glance satisfied me that you and none else was their too favoured object.”

“But the ambassadress ?” inquired the count in a tremulous voice.

“O ! she assured me of the fact ; and if I mistake not, quoted as her authority a certain high chamberlain’s lady.”

The count remained a few moments as it were lost in thought—then conquering his emotion, but eyeing from time to time with shy and sidelong glances his friend of former days, “Major !” exclaimed he, as with a painful effort, and in a hollow altered tone, “could you lend me a hundred napoleons ?”

The major was taken by surprise. He had been prepared for the effusions so customary and natural in an unfortunate lover, placed by Fate in a position so full of danger and misery to all concerned ; but there was something in the demand which accorded so little with the romantic features of the affair, that he could only gaze in astonishment on the count.

“I am a fugitive,” continued he, “and trusted I had at length found here a quiet haven, where I might breathe a while ; but lo ! it was my fate to love—ay, and be beloved, major, if ever man was !” Tears were in his eyes, but he mastered his emotion and proceeded in a firmer tone—“It is, in truth, a strange request, which, after so many years’ estrangement, I make of you on first meeting ; and yet I feel no shame in being thus a beggar. Comrade, remember those lost, never-to-be-forgotten days of northern glory—call to mind the affair of Majaisk.”

“I do !” replied the stranger, his eyes kindling and cheek flushing as he spoke.

“Do you remember how, when the Russian battery in the redoubt opened its murderous fire, and the balls ran whistling along our line, the recreant Piolsky gave orders to sound a retreat ?”

“Ay !” interrupted the stranger, in a voice of thunder—“and how you, count, cut him down—how the hussars turned the fortune of the day—how, calling ‘Forward, lancers of the tenth !’ you rushed upon the cannon, and in five minutes they were ours !”

"You remember?" whispered the count much moved—"well! once more my cry is 'Forward!' There is a comrade to be saved from worse than death. Forward, brave lancer, to the rescue!"

"He shall be rescued!" cried his friend; and Count Zroniefsky, with a silent but fervent pressure of the arm, through which he passed his own, hurried the stranger from the theatre.

"Well met!" exclaimed the count, as, early the following day, he encountered his friend in the street—"I was just on my way to request a slight favour of you."

"What I promised you last night, I presume? Come with me to my hotel, where it lies in readiness for you."

"For heaven's sake, don't mention money!" interrupted the count, or anything so dull and prosaic; I am in a mood too flippant, too removed from thoughts of earth, to listen to you. O, my dear friend, I have said to my angel that we are observed, and that I must needs fly, as to remain near her and not betray us both, is an impossibility."

"And may I venture to inquire her answer?"

"O! she is perfectly at ease, she rises superior to such base detractors. 'What can they say of us after all?' asked she; 'no greater evil than that we have found out each other's merits; and if they think this discovery worth making to others, I must just plead guilty to a bit of folly, and who is there that in the course of a lifetime has not one such at least to answer for?'"

"Sound philosophy," remarked the baron; "and not the less so, perhaps, that none more certainly run the risk of betraying themselves than those who are always flattering themselves with blinding every one. But will you pardon one question? It would appear from all this that you and your fair lady meet elsewhere than in an opera-box; for I think it could hardly be discussed between the acts of *Don Giovanni*."

"We do meet sometimes," said the count, lowering his voice to a whisper; "but how or where shall never of course be known while I remain alive. But harmless as all this is in itself, I know, as well as you do, that it cannot long go on. And it is this which keeps me ever on the alert, ready for a start at a moment's warning; and for this it was, comrade, that I sought your aid, as a poor exile cannot be supposed to be very flush of cash. But we'll talk of this to-morrow; let us make the most of to-day and its joys, and I will not quaff them the less deeply that the draught may be the last."

"What is it, then, I can help you in to-day?" inquired the baron. I think you said you were on your way to seek me."

"Ah, true, it was for what I must shortly explain. Sophia is aware you are my friend; indeed it is long since I told her all about you—not forgetting the history of the Bridge of the Berezina, where you took me up behind you at the risk of your life. She again spoke to you last night about Othello, did she not? Her mother will not allow it to be acted on account of some nursery tale—I scarce know what."

"You need not be so diplomatic," replied his friend, "I had it from her highness; and from her manner there seemed little hope of her yielding the point."

"I beg your pardon, I brought her to it at last by a single word. The princess begged and prayed, and you may believe I was nothing loath to come to her assistance. So I put on a serious face, and said I only hoped the reason for the piece being prohibited would not transpire, (as everything did,) at the foreign ambassador's; for one would not like to be shown up all over Europe as clinging to the relics of exploded superstitions. The duchess was forced to agree with me, and consented, though with a very bad grace, that the piece should be acted. But as she left the room, she muttered that the game was not lost yet, for though Othello might be forthcoming, Desdemona might happen to be indisposed."

"Well done, old soldier," cried the mayor, laughing; "you knew something of a German court when you pitted the fear of the scandalous chronicle against the dread of ghosts and of supernatural agency. I congratulate you on your victory."

"You may indeed, for Sophia is beside herself with delight at having gained her wish at last. I am at this moment on my way to the manager of the opera, furnished with four hundred arguments (alias dollars) to obviate any pecuniary difficulty, and I want you of all things to go with me."

"But will it not seem strange to offer such a sum in the princess's name?"

"O, that is obviated already. It is to be given as a subscription from some lovers of music, and pray do you play the enthusiast and the dilettante to keep up the farce. The manager lives not far from hence, and is an honest old scarecrow, whom we shall easily win to our side. Here, round this corner, major; the small house yonder with the bow-window."

The opera-manager was a little skinny man, who had been in his day a celebrated singer, and now, in his old age, reposed upon his laurels. He received the friends with a sort of courtly and artistical urbanity, strangely at variance with his droll habiliments. On his head he wore a black Florentine night-cap in lieu of the wig which he put on to go abroad; and there was, it must be confessed, some discrepancy between this commodious but homely head-gear, and the tightly-fitting modern frock-coat and smart breeches, which gave token that, though some sixty years had gone over his head, the little manager was still a bit of a dandy. His feet again, however, kept his head in countenance, for he shuffled about across the floor in such wide and well-worn free slippers, that his motion rather resembled skating than ordinary walking.

"I am already made acquainted," said the pompous little functionary, as the count proceeded to unfold his commission—"already apprized of the wish prevailing in high quarters regarding a certain favourite object, and nothing on my part can be wanting to fulfil it, my sole object in life being to enchant the royal ear with all that the divine art of music can possibly afford. I must, however, in all submission, take leave to premise certain considerations by which our joint views may be frustrated."

"Am I to understand from this that you decline bringing forward the opera?" said the count impatiently.

"God forbid I should," was the answer, "and thus implicate myself in a direct act of murder against the exalted family I serve. No, no, as long as I have anything to say in this management, that ill-omened piece shall never be given on these boards."

"Could I have supposed," exclaimed the disappointed emissary, "that a man like yourself was thus infected with popular delusion! From my earliest childhood I have been accustomed to hear your name quoted with honour as the prince of singers, and I longed to become personally acquainted. I should be sorry such a picture were marred in my mind's eye by the blot of superstition."

The old man was evidently flattered by the satisfied smile which crossed his withered features, and he shuffled about the room with his hands in his pockets, muttering. "You are too good—you do me too much honour: yet once upon a time I was somebody—I was reckoned in my day a tolerable tenor. But though all this is long over, I am not so much in my dotage as to listen to idle tales. Where there are *facts* to go upon, there is no room for superstition."

"Facts!" exclaimed both friends at once.

"Ay, gentlemen, stubborn facts. You are, neither of you, I believe, of this town or neighbourhood, else you could not have failed to know them."

"I have heard something of the legend," said the baron, slightly; "if I do not mistake, it bears that Othello is never acted without setting the town on fire."

"Fire! God forgive me, I had rather it were the signal for a general conflagration; for fire can be put out, and there are such things as engines and insurance offices. But death, gentlemen—we have no insurers against him."

"Death!" echoed the friends; "and who is to die?"

"Ah, that is no secret," said the manager, "though almost treason to give it utterance. As often as Othello appears on this stage, within eight days after must death carry off a member of the royal family."

The friends could not help starting up as if shot, from their chairs, there was in the tone in which the old man spoke something so mysterious and prophetic; and yet the next moment they resumed their seats, laughing at their own panic, without, however, in the least impairing by their mirth the solemnity of the little manager.

"You are pleased to be merry, gentlemen," said he; "and it is not for me to dispute your pleasure. But perhaps, if not trespassing too much on your time, you would cast your eyes over the Theatrical Register, kept from so far back as an hundred and twenty years, by our late prompter, who lived to the age of Methuselah himself."

"O by all means let's have the register!" exclaimed the count, still in high good-humour, and disposed to treat the whole affair as a joke; and the little functionary soon shuffled with unusual alacrity into an adjoining room, and returned bringing with him a ponderous, dingy, brass-clasped folio volume.

Putting on a pair of huge horn spectacles, he turned over the apparently familiar pages, and saying, "Attention, gentlemen, if you please to what I now read on account of its connexion," read thus—

‘A.D. 1740, Dec. 8th, met her death, Mademoiselle Charlotte Fandaner, of this theatre, during the representation of the tragedy of Othello, Moor of Venice, from Shakspeare.’”

“But,” interrupted the major, “how could Shakspeare’s Othello be acted here in 1740, when, if I do not greatly mistake, Schroder was the first to introduce it, many years later, to the German public?”

“I must beg your pardon there,” said the old man. “The grand duke in his travels to England had seen, and been so much delighted with, the piece, that he caused it to be translated, and acted on his return. But listen to what is further set down here. ‘The said Charlotte Fandaner, in the character of Desdemona, miserably perished by actual suffocation, under the bed-clothes, with which in the play her death is supposed to have been effected. May God have mercy on her unhappy soul!’ Now, gentlemen, this murder—for such it unquestionably was—has always been thus accounted for. Mademoiselle Fandaner, it seems, was extremely handsome, the duke of that day a very dissolute prince, and the knowledge of this induced the poor actress, on whom he placed his notoriously fickle affections, (which had already proved fatal to several earlier mistresses,) to bind by some terribly solemn compact her royal seducer. Faring no better, however, after her brief period of favour than her predecessors, the poor girl threatened to make public throughout Europe the nature of her princely lover’s vow, the particulars of which were already deposited in various foreign cities, awaiting only her signal for immediate publication.”

“Now the Grand Duke Neporunk was a man as relentless in his hatred as reckless in his loves. It is said he tried to poison her in various manners, but she baffled him by eating nothing she did not herself prepare. He then bethought him of the facilities afforded by the play of Othello, had it brought forward, and gave a stranger actor a bribe to play his part of a murderer so naturally, that somehow or other poor Charlotte Fandaner never woke more.

The count shuddered. “And is this all really true?” asked he of the manager.

“You may inquire of all the old people in the place,” was the answer; “not one of them will tell the story otherwise. An investigation was begun into the matter, but the grand duke quashed it, took the player into his own service, and gave out that the actress’s death was an unfortunate accident. But that day week he lost his only son, a fine little prince of twelve years old.”

“That at least was all accident,” said the major.

“You may call it so,” replied the manager, turning over the leaves, “but listen. Two years elapsed before Othello was again acted; the duke, since the murder, having taken a dislike to it. At the end of that time, however, he was reckless enough to forget all about it—and here occurs the following entry in the register: ‘On the 28th September, 1742, Othello, Moor of Venice;’ and on the margin please observe these remarks—‘Wonderful to relate, on 5th October died the princess Augusta, exactly eight days after the representation; just as happened this time two years to the late lamented prince Frederick.’ Accident, will you still call it, gentlemen?”

"Certainly, nothing more," reiterated both.

"Let me proceed, then," said the manager quietly. '6th February, 1748, Othello, Moor of Venice.' Perhaps it may be mere coincidence—but pray be pleased to look, gentlemen, and satisfy yourselves that the same hand made the marginal entry—'Awful to relate—the ghost of Mademoiselle Fandaner yet walks unappeased. Died on the 14th, prince Alexander, *suddenly*, eight days from the date of the above.'"

The old man stopped, and scanned his guests with a look of inquiry, which was this time met in silence. He then turned over his volume and read,—'January 16th, 1775—For the benefit of Mademoiselle Koller, Othello, Moor of Venice.' Opposite stands, 'Alas! poor princess Elizabeth, that thou shouldst be taken so early! Obiit 24th January, 1775.'

"Folly! sheer folly!" exclaimed the unconvinced major. "I grant there are such coincidences, brought about by the mere caprice of fortune; but I must have more rational grounds for belief, before I can connect the death of these dead royalties with the representation of Othello!"

"Sir," replied the old man very solemnly, "these it is not in my power to furnish; I can, however, remind you of the words of the great man from whose genius the play in question had its birth—

'There are more things between heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy.'

"I am aware of that," said the count; "but I doubt if Shakspeare would ever have uttered the remark, if he had foreseen how much nonsense might shelter behind it."

"Possibly," replied the late musico; "but please to listen a little further. I come now to record a somewhat more 'modern instance,' within my own recollection, and one which the grand duke himself afforded."

"What!" interrupted the major, "the same to whom the actress owed her catastrophe?"

"The same. Othello had not been performed for upwards of twenty years, when foreign royalties (I remember it as if yesterday) came on a visit to the palace. They patronized the theatre; and, reason or none, one of the stranger princesses insisted on the revival of Othello. The grand duke consented very reluctantly; not from any dread of the awful circumstances connected with previous representations, for he was a freethinker, and believed in nothing of the sort. But he was grown old, and the sins of his youth began to lie heavily on his heart, and he loathed the very thoughts of the unlucky tragedy. Whether, however, the wish to please the foreign lady, or the dread of being laughed at by the public, predominated, he gave way; and the piece, hastily studied and got up, was brought forward. See, gentlemen, here is the entry—'16th October, 1793, Othello—at the Court Theatre, Chateau de H—. By his royal highness's special command.'"

"Well, old man, and what ensued? tell us quickly!" exclaimed the friends impatiently.

"That day eight days—24th October, 1793, his royal highness expired."

"Impossible!" said the major, after a pause. "Let us see your register; where is this about the grand duke? I see nothing noted in the margin."

"No, sir," replied the old man, bringing in a couple of other volumes—"but will you take the trouble to inspect these? the one is a life of the duke, the other, an account of his funeral obsequies?"

The count took in his hand a little thin book, bound in black, and read, "Description of the solemn lying-in-state on 24th October, 1793, of the lately deceased high and mighty prince—"

"This stuff," he exclaimed, springing up, "would go far to make fools of sensible men; and yet 'tis but chance, all chance, and nothing more. And have you," added he, after a pause, "any more such wonderful histories?"

"I could bring forward several," replied the old man composedly, "if I were not afraid of wearying you—but one shall suffice, and that as it were of yesterday. Rossini composed his opera of *Othello*, thereby proving—which some had doubted—his power to touch the deepest chords of tragic emotion in the human breast. In the absence of any command from the court, the piece was never brought out at the theatre; but the royal band got the music and practised it, and so enchanted the public by some pieces performed in the concert-room, that nothing was talked of henceforward but *Othello*. No one seemed to apprehend, or even dream of, the appalling circumstances connected with the unfortunate tragedy, as having anything to do with the musical version, and, in compliance with the universal wish, the then manager (for I was still a singer and performed *Othello*) received at length the order to bring out the opera.

"The house was filled to suffocation—the court and nobility were all there—the orchestra exerted itself to the uttermost, and the singers outdid themselves; and yet—I know not why—we all experienced uncomfortable sensations when Desdemona, having sung her famous song, laid her harp aside, and prepared to go to rest, and the cruel Moor stole in to accomplish his murderous purpose. The house, the stage, the scenes, were the same which had witnessed the premature end, in the very same character, of a creature full of health and beauty. Even I (notwithstanding the bloody nature of my part) could not help casting an anxious trembling glance towards the ducal box, where sat so many blooming scions of royalty, and inwardly apostrophizing the perturbed spirit of the murdered songstress, and hoping that the sweet sounds with which her wrongs were now for ever associated, might have the effect of soothing and appeasing her. It seemed to be so—five, six days passed, and no tidings of any illness in the royal circle. People began to laugh at a ghost which transformation into an opera could cheat of its revenge; the seventh day came and went, in peace—but, on the eighth, Prince Ferdinand was shot out hunting!"

"I heard of that," said the major hastily; "it was a mere accident—the going off by chance of his companion's gun."

"And did I ever say," rejoined the imperturbable old man, "that the ghost itself had pulled the trigger? I only spoke of some inexplicable and supernatural connexion."

"The connexion, such as it is, has yet to be proved," said both his hearers—"where is it set down that eight days before that fatal *chasse* Othello had been acted?"

"Here!" said the manager, pointing out the page in the register, and the count himself read—"Othello, an opera by Rossini, 12th March, 18—" and on the margin, three times underlined, the note—"On the 20th of the same month Prince Ferdinand lost his life out shooting."

The gentlemen looked at each other a few minutes, and said nothing; they would fain have laughed, but the old man's solemnity, and the strange and distressing coincidence of the events narrated by him, had taken stronger hold on them than they chose to acknowledge. The major turned over the register, and tried to whistle—the count seemed in a brown study, and sat leaning his head on his hand. He sprang up at length, however, exclaiming—"Be all this as it may, there is now no help for it; the opera must go on. The court, the foreign ambassadors, are all aware of the intention, and we should become a laughing-stock were it to be abandoned on such grounds. Here, sir, are four hundred dollars, consigned to you by some amateurs of music, to insure a brilliant début to this favourite opera. Buy with them what you will," added he, smiling, "and a whole band of exorcists, and whatever may be needful to lay the ghost in the Red Sea—but Othello we must and will have."

"Gentlemen," said the old manager solemnly, "time was, when in my young days I might have smiled and scoffed at such things as you do; but age has sobered me, and I have learned that there is more in them than we are willing to admit. I thank you for your liberal gift, and will not misapply it. But it is only, I warn you, by express command from the highest quarter that I will bring out the piece. Good God!" exclaimed he, in a voice of deep emotion, "if the dark lot should again be cast, and the fair and favourite child, the Princess Sophia, should be the victim!"

"Peace, old man!" cried the count, turning pale, "your hallucinations are enough to make one moonstruck at noon-day! Adieu! Remember that, *coute qu'il coute*, Othello must be acted. Spare yourself all the theatrical *ruses* of colds and fevers, catarrhs and hoarse-nesses, for I swear by Old Nick himself, that if no Desdemona is forthcoming, I'll summon up the ghost of the murdered lady, to resume, for one night only, her abdicated part."

The little manager crossed himself, and shuffled uneasily up and down the room. "What a reckless way of talking!" muttered he sadly to himself—"what if she were to take him at his word, like the statue in Don Juan?" then aloud—"Gentlemen, I pray you, no more of this; who knows how near any one may be to his own perdition!"

The friends exchanged a smile on leaving the apartment—and yet the musical prophet with the silk skull-cap and fur slippers would not, (laugh at him as they might,) like Desdemona's nurse's song, for long "go out of their mind."

SIMILITUDINES.—No. IV.

BY MISS H. B. MACDONALD.

THE ZEPHYR.

It left the bower at early morn,
 Where soft it had been sleeping,
 With perfumes from each flowery urn,
 And dews, that each bright bud adorn,
 Around its slumbers creeping.

Yet thence it roamed, a wanton thing!
 Seeking afar for gladness:—
 O, after such sweet nurturing,
 Strange seems the bliss the world can bring
 'Midst bowers that bloom in sadness!

And first it wandered far and high,
 Behind a sky-lark's soaring;
 And revelled in the melody,
 Whose waves around were gushingly
 In song and rapture pouring.

And next it strayed through the dim retreat
 Of a poet's noontide slumbers;
 And near him sang, in wailing meet—
 Giving the tone of sadness sweet,
 That ever haunts his numbers!

And then it sought a gladder place,
 Where many a youthful daughter
 Her early way 'mid flowers did trace;
 And it played with her waving tresses' grace,
 And rang through the silvery laughter.

Then a butterfly it danced before,
 And kissed its golden pinion,
 And bore it grove and meadow o'er,
 But the butterfly left in fated hour,
 For a darker lot's dominion.

And then it hung above a rose,
 Till the rose with noontide perished;
 But on its way it lightly goes,
 Nor less for the ill-fated close
 Of all it once hath cherished.

Unto a sad Eolian lyre,
 It came, at eve, with failing
 Breath—that throughout each mornful wire,
 Doth sadly now its last respire,
 Like penitence's wailing.

And what have ye, O pleasure-born?
 Who wander too light-hearted,
 Your glittering hopes of youth to earn,
 But penitence's lot to mourn,
 When all hath thus departed?

Sept. 1841.

THE POET AND THE REVIEWER.

A TALE OF THE LITERARY WORLD.

BY MRS. ABDY.

A NEW number of the —— Review had just appeared ; it was a particularly brilliant number ; that is, it was more than usually cutting and satirical ; subscribers begged for it at the circulating libraries, and members canvassed for it at the book societies ; but alas ! what was sport to the public was death to the poor unfortunates who groaned under the lash of the unmerciful reviewers. A popular tourist, a fashionable novelist, a man of science, and a young poet, were severally put to the torture in the most approved gradations of mental suffering, beginning with the thumb-screw, and ending with the rack. One only of the poisoned shafts, however, penetrated to the heart of the victim. The tourist had just received five hundred pounds for his copyright, and was so agreeably employed in paying his wine-merchant's account, ordering a grand piano for his wife, and engaging a house for the season at a crowded watering-place, that the arrow flew by him unheeded. The novelist was absolutely pleased with the attack ; he was decidedly partial to persecution, and passed two mornings in calling on his friends, and telling them, in strict confidence, that Lord H—, who it was well known had great influence with the —— Reviewers, had instigated them to abuse his novel on account of the important disclosures which it contained of the flirtations, extravagancies, debts, and peccadillos of the said Lord H.'s niece, the celebrated Lady Emily D— ! The man of science had recently purchased railroad shares, they had risen in value, and he was undecided whether to part with them at a small profit, or to wait the chance of a larger one : while thus engaged in watching the scale of interest, he felt perfectly indifferent as to the evolutions of the balance of criticism. But the young poet—there the arrow told with fatal force ; the poem was his first publication—he had, for months before its appearance, been building airy castles of fame and enjoyment, imagining himself beloved by the beautiful, sought by the studious, petted by publishers, courted by countesses, and now—the sad reverse !—he lay on a sofa, having ordered his servant to deny him to all visitors under the just plea of indisposition ; the fatal review was beside him, and a faithful friend sat opposite to him.

"Now, really, Orford," said Tresham for the twentieth time, "you should not make yourself so unhappy about nothing."

"Nothing !" repeated the sufferer, in a reproachful tone ; "O Tresham, you do not understand the feelings of an author."

"Pardon me, I can very well understand the feelings of a penniless author, whose abilities for rhyming constitute the stock in trade by the successful sale of which he is to soften his rigid landlady, and

silence his dunning laundress; but you are rich, Orford, you need not covet gold."

"Only the golden violet," replied his friend with a faint smile; "and that I am never likely to attain; this review is the most important of its class, it will stamp degradation and ridicule on me at the outset of my career; a review broke the heart of Kirke White; a review shortened the days of Keats—it will have the same effect on me. Were it written without talent or cleverness, I think I could bear it, but the wit of the writer equals his ill-nature."

"Quite so," replied Tresham, laughing; "how excessively amusing the passage is in which he compares you to ——"

"You need not proceed," said Orford, with some pique—"every word of the article is deeply engraven on my mind; and if it affords so much diversion to my friend, how can I expect that it will fail to delight and gratify those who are indifferent to me?"

"But why should anybody know you are the sufferer?" asked Tresham; "you published under the name of Sidney Greville."

"True," replied Orford, "but every body in my native country knows me by that name, since it was my signature during three years in which I was a contributor to the ——shire Journal. I there attained some fame, and probably excited some envy—there will be many who will exult in my defeat, and make it public in their own circle."

"Come, Orford, shake off these gloomy thoughts, and take a turn up St. James's-street with me."

"Not for the world; everybody I meet will be full of the review."

"Poor Orford! you verify the saying, 'He that is giddy thinks the world turns round.' Because all your ideas are occupied by this annoying review, you imagine that the whole money-making, pleasure-loving population of the 'Great Metropolis' have their thoughts, hopes, and feelings stitched up in a stiff paper cover!"

"Jest is not argument, Tresham,—I cannot face any of my acquaintance."

"Then go and travel for a few months."

"That expedient will not answer. In these days of locomotion we are sure to encounter some of our acquaintance 'taking tea and toast upon the wall of China.' The English like to inflict their dulness on one of their countrymen, and I shall be insulted with perpetual condolences on the extreme barbarity of the —— reviewers."

"I will tell you," said Tresham, after a short pause, "what will be the best course that you can pursue—take a journey with me. I have long promised to go and see my cousin, Lady Walwyn. She has been two years a widow, and lives in such retirement, that you need not shrink from the idea of encountering any of your acquaintance at her house. She has an elderly maiden aunt, Miss Cobham, living with her—a worthy, good-natured creature, who plays propriety admirably—therefore I shall not outrage decorum by taking a young man to visit her. I am sure that she will exactly suit you. She is a literary lady, and has sent some very pretty contributions to the magazines and annuals."

"The very reverse of what I could wish," ejaculated poor Orford.

"If she is a literary lady, how she will despise one who has been so severely handled by the —— Review!"

"In all probability she has not yet seen the —— Review," said Tresham. "Ladies in the country are usually dependent on book societies for their periodicals; and it has always been a matter of deep mystery to me who gets the new works at book-societies, for I never yet met with a member who did not complain bitterly of the lack of them; besides, should she even have read the review, it only criticizes the poem of Sidney Greville, and how in the world is she to identify you with that name? Cumberland is very widely distant from your native county, and you may depend upon it that all your triumphs in the ——shire Journal are quite unknown to Lady Walwyn."

Much more was said on the subject by the good-natured Tresham, who really felt anxious to introduce his friend to his cousin, not only with a regard to the present gratification of both parties, but to their permanent attachment.

Lady Walwyn had sacrificed herself, through motives of filial duty, to a man many years her senior; he had died within a year after their union, and now, although beautiful, clever, and well connected, she persisted in living in retirement, seeking in literature her only solace and enjoyment, when Tresham deemed that she ought to be breaking hearts at Almack's, and appearing among the engravings of the Book of Beauty, instead of quietly confining herself to its printed leaves. Three days after this conversation took place, Tresham and his friend were safely domesticated under the roof of Lady Walwyn, and Orford appeared quite as happy in her society as Tresham could have hoped, although he did not feel quite at his ease, until he had interrogated her whether her bookseller had sent her down the periodicals of the month, and received her assurance that she had read a few of the magazines, but had not seen one of the reviews.

A month passed, a tranquil happy month; Orford so far got the better of the wound inflicted by the reviewer, that he did not mention the subject above five times a day to Tresham; he addressed sonnets to Lady Walwyn, he prevailed on her to indulge him with the inspection of her manuscripts, and he by turns wrote poetry to her music, and composed melodies to her poetry. Orford was *minus* a heart by his visit to Cumberland, but it was pretty evident that he had gained one in exchange. Tresham meanwhile was exemplary in his attentions to the maiden aunt, constantly walking by her side, and contriving to keep her at least fifty yards before or behind the "happy pair," who were evidently in the way of being all and all to each other.

Miss Cobham was never weary of descanting on Tresham's politeness and courtesy, and declared that he was a model for all the young men of the age. Honey, however, will cloy, and Tresham began to grow quite weary of the sameness of his life, and to wish to return to London.

"My dear Orford," he said one day, "why delay your proposal to Clarissa? it is evident that you are attached to her, and that she returns your affection; lay poetry aside, I beseech you, and speak to the purpose in plain prose."

"O, Tresham!" exclaimed Orford, "can you believe that I have forgotten that fatal review?—do you think that I could propose to Clarissa without confessing to her that I am an abject wretch, held up to the scorn of the public without means of redress or defence? she will despise me, she will cast me off, the instant the confession is made to her."

"She will do no such thing;" said Tresham, "my cousin, albeit a poetess, has an excellent solid understanding; she knows the world of literature better, perhaps, than any other part of the world, and she is quite aware that reviewers are not quite prophets, and that they have often exalted the blockhead, and frowned upon the man of genius."

"Perhaps, then," said Orford nervously, "you will have the kindness to break it to her."

Tresham repeated, "Break it to her!" in a rallying tone, but he deemed the suggestion worth acting upon, and requested a private interview with Lady Walwyn, with an extremely grave face, considering that by raising her fears, and inducing her to suppose that some very serious obstacle existed to her union with Orford, she would be relieved by the disclosure of the truth, and glad to compound for no worse a misfortune than the "cutting and maiming" of her poet-love at the hands of the ———— reviewers.

Tresham, in consequence, after sounding the praise of Orford's person, talents, temper, landed property, and money in the funds, spoke of his affection for Lady Walwyn, his hopes that it was not displeasing to her, his anxiety to propose to her, and the sad solitary reason which impeded him from so doing.

"I know it," said Lady Walwyn, "I know it but too well; I have seen that some unexplained sorrow weighs heavily on the heart of Orford even in his gayest moments. I surmise the cause, alas! some prior attachment exists, some engagement to one probably far more deserving than myself, through which which he wishes yet dreads to break."

"No, no, Clarissa," said Tresham, "Orford's heart and hand were free as air a month ago; it is not one of your delightful sex whom he regards as an enemy to his happiness,"

"O, then!" exclaimed Lady Walwyn with increased trepidation, "he is engaged in a dispute, probably intending to terminate it by hostile means; and yet how can Orford, with his principles and strict conscientiousness, bear to think of appearing in the character of a duellist?"

"Again you are wrong, my dear cousin; Orford's foe is not easily to be discovered; he is an invisible personage, a being 'without a local habitation,' a shadow who launches his darts from a paper castle; but do not imagine that I am initiating you into the mysteries of a German romance. Orford, you know, is, like yourself, literary; but he has not, like you, had the prudence to confine himself to the 'primrose path' of magazines and annuals; he has encountered what Lady Hesketh calls 'the fierce eye of the public,' and his effusions, while yet damp from the press, have been seized upon by a hard-hearted reviewer, who has victimized the poor author without mercy; the shock was severe to his sensitive mind; he left London to avoid

his friends, and flying from friendship, fell into love ; his feelings now are something like those of a knight unhorsed at the tournament in sight of his lady fair, and he will never muster up courage to offer himself and his worldly goods to you, unless you bid him ' live for your sake,' or, in plainer language, try to convince him that he has been making ' much ado about nothing !' "

" I am truly glad that the matter is no worse," said Lady Walwyn, with a bright smile, " yet I can quite enter into the feelings of poor Orford ; however, in his presence I shall make very light of the affair, and assure him of what indeed is an acknowledged fact, that the Quarterly often dries the tears which the Edinburgh has caused to flow, and that the Critical heals the wounds inflicted by the Monthly. I conclude of course that it is to some inferior publication that Orford is indebted for this attack ; for although I have not seen the reviews for some time, I have read their table of contents in the newspapers, and am certain that Orford's poem did not form a part of them."

" You are mistaken," said Tresham ; " Orford has been attacked by one of the first of the periodicals, the ——— Review, but he did not write under his own name ; he employed the signature which he had affixed to his early fugitive writings, Sidney Greville."

Lady Walwyn turned pale, her lip quivered, she burst into tears, and, pleading indisposition, quitted the room.

" Now what anomalies women are," soliloquised Tresham, " especially women who write for the periodicals ! Here is my cousin, attached to an amiable and excellent young man of congenial tastes, habits, and pursuits to her own, and fortune and connexions to match, and yet her predilection for him is evidently weakened, because some writer, whom she does not know, has decried and ridiculed him in a review which she *does* know. How much is there in the ' magic of a name !' Had I told her that Orford had been shown up in the Diurnal Inquisitor, or the Hebdomadal Intelligencer, she would have cared nothing about it. I thought my cousin was a superior woman, free from prejudice and weakness, but I shall come to the same opinion of the fair sex held by honest John Moody, that ' the best—when she's mended—won't have much goodness to spare !' "

Tresham, however, did not make Orford a party to his unfavourable opinion of " heaven's last best work," but merely told him, in general terms, that he had informed Lady Walwyn of the matter in question, and that she had remarked that the praise of one reviewer frequently followed close upon the dispraise of another. Lady Walwyn appeared at dinner, and Tresham hoped that she would have recovered her spirits ; but her eyes were red, her manner embarrassed, and her constraint quickly communicated itself to her unfortunate lover.

Tresham saw that matters must not be permitted to proceed at this rate, and the moment the servants had quitted the room, he boldly began on the subject of the review, and called on Lady Walwyn to assist him in rallying Orford on his sensitiveness. She faintly and pensively echoed his remarks. Tresham had been more than once reproved by Orford for suffering merriment to overpower him when alluding to some clever sarcasm of the reviewer. He considered the present a fine opportunity of atoning for the offences of the past, and

consequently began a most animated attack, not only on the sentiments, but the style of the article in question.

"You would be perfectly indignant, Clarissa," he said, "were you to read it; the stupidity of it can only be equalled by the malignity. The writer appears to possess equal ignorance of grammar and of gentlemanly feeling; he is evidently some low, contemptible fellow, the meanness of whose mind and manners infuses itself into every line of his detestable scrawl."

Tresham would have added much more in the same strain, for, like a counsel, he was beginning to wax warm with the wrongs of his client, but Miss Cobham prevented him by exclaiming, "Clarissa, my love, I am sure you are very ill." The truth of the observation was proved just as it was uttered—Lady Walwyn had fainted!

Lady Walwyn did not appear again that evening, and did not leave her room the next morning. Miss Cobham sent to request an interview with Tresham.

"Dear Clarissa had no sleep last night," she said, "and yet will not allow me to send for medical advice. It is no common illness—her mind is seriously affected."

"Yes," replied Tresham, "she evidently keenly feels the indignity offered to her lover by these dons of literature, who I fervently wish were sent out to edit the New Zealand Gazette."

"That is not the whole of the matter," rejoined Miss Cobham. "Clarissa is not merely unhappy about the things that have happened, but about those that have not happened."

Tresham opened his eyes, and waited eagerly for an explanation of this oracular declaration.

"It is my opinion," solemnly observed Miss Cobham, "that my dear niece is affected with monomania."

"Monomania indeed!" repeated Tresham, looking rather contemptuously on the good lady, of whose knowledge of human complaints he did not entertain a very favourable opinion, seeing that she was proprietress of a medicine-chest which was a perfect Pandora's box to the poor in the neighbourhood, and from which she showered Morrison's pills like hail-stones, and dispensed syrop of poppies in such liberal doses, that the sleep produced by them was one from which it was very difficult to awaken the patient.

"Yes," repeated Miss Cobham, "it is a decided case of monomania. I have been speaking to Clarissa about Mr. Orford, and trying to convince her that the trouble of which he and she think so much is one of very little consequence compared with the real trials of life. The poor Batemans down in the village have a bed-ridden father and a blind mother quite dependent on them, seven children in the hooping-cough, and the landlord calling every day for his rent."

"Very sad, very deplorable indeed," interrupted Tresham; "but I heard you relate the whole story yesterday, and gave you a sovereign for them—pray return to Lady Walwyn."

"She told me," continued Miss Cobham, "that she could never unite herself to Orford, never even endure to see him again; that she had clouded his prospects and destroyed his hopes, and that she had been a treacherous assailant and a secret foe to him. Now poor

Clarissa would not be the enemy of a sparrow, and Mr. Orford was a perfect stranger to her when he arrived in Cumberland, and since then, I am sure, all her actions to him have been those of kindness and good-will."

"Very true," said Tresham, musing—"it is an extraordinary and inexplicable business."

"Not unprecedented, however," replied Miss Cobham; "cases of monomania are sadly on the increase."

And hereupon she showed a great inclination to enter into the particular cases of two of her intimate friends, one of whom was a gentleman, who held the firm belief that he was a tea kettle, and the other a lady, who entertained a decided conviction that she was an air-balloon, and who were both of them so remarkably clever in other respects, and so rational on all general subjects, that the gentleman had been solicited to lecture on metaphysics, and the lady was preparing for the press a treatise on political economy."

"I shall be delighted," said Tresham, "to hear all these interesting particulars to-morrow; and were I in your place, I should certainly forward an account of them to the editor of the *Lancet*; but at present I can think of nothing but Clarissa; all her illness, mental and bodily, seems to hinge upon this annoying Review."

"Yes," replied Miss Cobham, "I would not have her see it for the world. I hope, if you have the number with you, that you will burn it; I cannot bear the thought that she might accidentally get hold of it. O, what would the feelings of that atrocious reviewer be, if he knew the evil he had done! but perhaps his conscience is in a completely seared state."

Miss Cobham was about to draw a vivid picture of the appalling state of mind of an impenitent reviewer, when Tresham interrupted her.

"I do not agree with your view of the case," he said; "I would have every apprehensive person know the worst at once; if misfortune were always looked full in the face, it would lose much of its repulsive aspect. Perhaps Lady Walmyn surmises that this review contains some aspersions on the moral character of Orford, and she will be relieved when she finds that it only attacks his poetical talents. I will send it up immediately to her dressing-room."

Miss Cobham vehemently opposed this measure, but Tresham was resolute; he wrote a few lines to his cousin, explaining his reason for wishing her to read the Review, sent it up by the hands of her own maid, and then repaired to Orford, whom he vainly endeavoured to console under his distressing conviction that his disgrace was breaking the heart of the woman whom he loved, and who returned his affection.

Miss Cobham listened at the dressing-room door, fearing that Lady Walwyn would go into hysterics at the end of the first page; hearing no sound, she imagined that she had fainted, and peeped through the keyhole to ascertain the fact, but Lady Walwyn sat very quietly and calmly reading the review, and Miss Cobham was compelled to admit that Tresham had, to all appearance, proved himself able to "medicate to a mind diseased." Lady Walwyn appeared at dinner

quite her former self, cheerful, tranquil, and self-possessed; when the dessert was placed on the table she alluded to the review, assured Orford that it was quite unworthy the anxiety and trouble that it had caused to himself and his friends, reminded him that Reviewers of no common fame had declared Lord Byron to be no poet, and had afterwards honourably and readily recanted their opinion; in short, she spoke on the subject as a woman of a firm mind and an affectionate temper would speak, and Orford cheered up under the influence of this unexpected sunshine. When the party walked out that evening, Tresham persuaded Miss Cobham, before they had reached the end of the first lane, that the air was damp, and likely to give her cold, and as he offered to turn back to the house with her, and requested that she would favour him with a minute account of her talented monomaniacal friends, she was perfectly ready to comply with his recommendation. Orford and Lady Walwyn returned to the house an engaged couple, the next week they repaired to London, and the next month they were married.

Two years elapsed; the married pair were perfectly happy; the lady continued to write, the gentleman did the same, and he had been lauded and encouraged in so many periodicals, that he had quite forgiven, and almost forgotten, the atrocities of the — Review. One morning he came into the room with a new publication in his hand. "Clarissa," he said, "the editor of a recently established magazine has requested me to give him a little assistance in the reviewing department; he wishes me to write for him a spirited playful critique of Lord Cornelius Cleverley's nineteenth novel. I have no talent for lively writing, you will do it capitally; do take the task off my hands."

"Never," said Clarissa, pushing the volumes from her with as much horror as if she expected them to explode. "O, Orford, you cannot have an idea of the pain I feel at the very name of a review."

"But why, my dear Clarissa? I have long recovered the electrical shock given to me by a reviewer in the commencement of my poetical career, and the dons of criticism have certainly since that time made the *amende honorable* to me; why, then, should you continue to feel such horror of them?"

"I will tell you," said Clarissa, "and the confession will afford a clue to a part of my conduct previous to our marriage, that must always have struck you as very mysterious. A short time before you were introduced to me, I received a letter and a parcel from a literary gentleman of my acquaintance; he was one of the — reviewers; the sudden illness of a near relative incapacitated him from writing a review of a new poem; he enclosed the work to me, and requested that I would favour him with a criticism on it, bearing in mind that the criticism was to be as poignant and severe as I could contrive to make it: the volume bore on its title-page the name of Sidney Greville! I was flattered by this request from a man of talent and celebrity; I read the poem submitted to me, not with a disposition to admire and appreciate it, but with a view to cavil at and ridicule it. I produced a criticism, sent it to the reviewer, and did not entertain the slightest idea that I should ever encounter the author, whom I had

treated with such injustice. Imagine my feelings when I discovered that the man so warmly admired and so truly loved by me was Sidney Greville; and that he was dispirited and unhappy from the wound inflicted by my wanton and cruel hand. I had fully determined never again to see you, when Tresham sent up to me the review that had been the source of so much misery to us both, and I turned to the hateful article, dreading from the account that Tresham had given of its virulence and asperity, that it was even worse than my recollection had depicted it to me. O what was my delight when I found that not a line of it was written by myself; that my criticism had evidently been thrown by as wanting severity and spirit, and that of a practised writer substituted in its place! My mind was relieved at once from the trouble that pressed upon it. I was guiltless of the attack that had so wounded your feelings, and I could now sympathize with you and console you, without feeling myself to be a culprit and a hypocrite. The next day I received my criticism in an enclosure from the reviewer, complimenting me on the talent it displayed, but saying that it was too essentially lady-like and refined to suit the pages of the ——— Review, and that he had applied to an experienced friend, who had written one for him better adapted to the general tone of the publication. I immediately committed it to the flames, feeling truly grateful that the public eye had never rested on it, and I resolved that no temptation should ever induce me to write another article of the kind."

"Dearest Clarissa," said Orford, "how you astonish and affect me; but you might have written fifty criticisms without any hazard of meeting the object of one of them, and becoming attached to him."

"Precisely so," answered Clarissa; "and the charmed bullets of the 'Fatal Marksman' performed their destined duty to his full satisfaction many times, till at length they penetrated the heart of his best and dearest; we may not indeed happen to wound our beloved, but we may wound the beloved of another, and should shrink from inflicting the torments that we are unwilling to endure."

"Would you then banish reviewers from the world of letters, Clarissa?"

"Nay, I do not say that; I believe reviewers to be as necessary in the field of literature as commanding officers in the field of battle; I only require that woman, gentle tender-hearted woman, should feel that she is out of her place in such a scene of turbulence and conflict, and that she could not appear more unlovely and unattractive wielding the javelin of the Amazon, than she does when launching the pointed shafts of the reviewer!"

THE WHITE POPPY.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Thou hast no power to charm our eye,
Or aid us in our need,
Disdainfully we pass thee by,
Thou pale and worthless weed !
Bright flowers are near thy dwelling-place,
And corn is waving round,
Thou dost but sadden and deface
This gay and fertile ground.

Yet hold—my censure I repress—
Thy wondrous juice contains
A spell to soothe in drowsiness
The weary sufferer's pains ;
He sighs for sleep—in thought he shrinks
From night's long train of woes,
Till of thy lulling draught he drinks,
And sinks to soft repose.

What were to him the fragrant flowers
That lavish Nature yields,
What the rich vineyard's purple stores,
The harvest of the fields ?
Scarce fruits improved by careful art,
Fair buds of varied dyes,
How would they mock his throbbing heart,
How cheat his aching eyes !

Let me no more with erring sense
God's mystic works arraign,
The mighty hand of Providence
Hath nothing made in vain ;
Nor need I quit this lonely mead
His gracious love to scan,
Since even in a simple weed
I trace his care for man.

SPENCER MIDDLETON; OR, THE SQUIRE OF RIVER HILL.

BY GEORGE STANLEY, ESQ.

CHAPTER XII.

In which a slight progress is made through the medium of a conversation *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*.

"PHILLIP'S bill, my dear," said Mrs. Hamilton, as she presented to the eyes of her husband a full-length document of some forty items, about three weeks after our hero's cold bath.

"Very well, my dear," replied Gerard's father, casting his eyes on the sum-total—"thirty-two pound ten, is it not, my dear? Add it to the heap, and let me know how much you will want."

"Dear, dear, Mr. Hamilton, how careless you are about pecuniary matters!" exclaimed the methodical old lady, with upturned eyes and uplifted hands. "What! without looking at the items?" And then running over the bill—"Letters—seventeen shillings and sixpence—how many letters have you had, my dear?"

"I am sure I do not know, and what is more, I don't care, Maggie."

"Dear, dear, then it is impossible to check that item."

"Decidedly so, Maggie," replied the imperturbable husband, not taking his eyes off the last evening's Standard.

"Come, here is the lodging—twenty-seven pounds three shillings—is that right, Mr. Hamilton?"

"Most probably, dear."

"Most probably! I'm astonished at your carelessness, Mr. Hamilton. How do you expect to bring up our children with proper notions of economy, unless you set them a good example? Most probably! I'm astonished, Mr. Hamilton."

"And so am I, my dear," replied the husband, with a sarcastic smile.

"Margaret dear," continued the old lady to her daughter, who sat stooping over a worsted working-frame, on which appeared a tall, ungainly brigand, with such features as can only be perpetrated on canvass by the means of square stitches—"Margaret dear, just follow me in checking this sum, dear."

The young lady deserted the brigand, and prepared to act secretary to her mother.

"Now, dear—five weeks and three days, at five pound a week. Follow me. Five times twenty, one hundred—seven into ten, once and three over—seven into thirty, four and two over—put down, dear, fourteen shillings."

Margaret made onestep in the sum.

"Then, dear," continued the old lady, "twice twelve, twenty-four—seven into twenty-four goes three and three over—put down threepence—fourteen and threepence."

Margaret advanced another step towards perfection.

"Then, dear, three fours are twelve—seven into twelve, once and five over—that makes fourteen shillings and threepence farthing—and then, five times ten—"

"Excuse me, my dear Maggie," interrupted Mr. Hamilton, "decimals always make me unwell. Farthings, dear, are quite low enough, quite economical enough for me."

"O, as you please, my dear—just what I thought; they have calculated it at fourteen and fourpence a day, instead of fourteen three and a farthing."

"And seven-tenths, my dear," suggested Mr. Hamilton.

"Which makes a difference, my dear, of—"

"Somewhere about twopence farthing and two-tenths," continued the tiresome *cara sposa*.

"That is always your way, Mr. Hamilton," replied the much-insulted lady, with a due assumption of dignity. "The proverb says—see Poor Richard, page thirteen—take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves."

"But nothing, my dear, about the farthings or the decimals."

"How can you be so tiresome, Mr. Hamilton?—it is quite provoking."

"Besides, my dear," continued the old gentleman, "the same Poor Richard says elsewhere, 'Save at the spigot, and lose at the bung-hole.' But come, my dear, I suppose that will cover all—there's a check for a hundred, and I don't think we could have spent more than that even on classic ground."

The old lady took the money, with a proper and dignified air of commingled obedience to her lord and master, and pity for his utter carelessness of the minutiae of bills.

"By-the-bye, Margaret, shall we not have a visit from the boys to-day—our last day but one? Upon my word, I almost regret that Spencer has got well enough to leave us; if it were not for his sufferings, I could wish him back in your infirmary, Margaret."

"O surely not, papa," replied Margaret, as with a crooked stitch she made the quadrangular pupil of her brigand's left eye squint most horribly.

"I don't see that, Margaret," observed her mother, looking up from her dear accounts. "Two quarts of chicken broth, untasted; a large jug of lemonade, never touched; half a dozen most lively leeches, put on only once; and such a delightful blister, never used at all."

"Perhaps, my dear," suggested her husband, with a most grave countenance—"perhaps you would feel obliged to one of us if we would fall ill, and consume the relics of the hospital stock?"

"How can you suppose any such thing, Mr. Hamilton?—though, really, if you could be ill now, instead of waiting till you return to Hethersett, it would be far from inconvenient."

"Shall I send for Dr. Keats, dear, and have a fit of the gout made to order?"

"Really, Mr. Hamilton, you do say most extraordinary things. What good would a fit of the gout be?—except, indeed, for the lemonade and the leeches, perhaps—as for Dr. Keats, I cannot bear him."

"What for, my dear?" inquired her tormentor.

"He is so narrow-minded, has no opinion of brown-paper plasters, broom tea, or decoction of marygold flowers, and actually sneers at Doctor Dosemwell's last preparation of aqua pumpaginis antimoritura."

"That is, he prefers being sent out of the world legally, to being dosed out of it by balsam of fire-brass, or any other quack poison."

"But do but consider, Mr. Hamilton, the numbers of miraculous cures that have been effected by Dosemwell's preparation."

"And which," replied the old gentleman, reading a portion of the doctor's advertisement from his favourite paper, "'which may be seen or heard of personally or by letter, postpaid, every day, at the office, 25, Barbican, where the mixture is still continued to be dispensed in bottles of half a crown, seven and-sixpence, and one guinea each, including the government stamp, with a liberal allowance to families or shopkeepers taking three gallons and upwards.'"

"Perhaps, my dear"—Mrs. Hamilton tried to say, becoming excited with her husband's attack on her pet nostrum.

"*Nota bene*," continued the imperturbable spouse, without heeding the attempted interruption—"'*Nota bene*—None genuine which have not the name of the inventor engraved twenty-five thousand three hundred and twenty-seven times and a half on the government stamp.' And now, my dear, what were you going to say?"

"Perhaps, my dear," said his wife, with a colour rather too heightened to be comfortable to the possessor of it—"perhaps—no doubt—you will not believe that Humphrey Digges, after being under the hands of Doctor Bolus for fourteen weeks for chronic rheumatism, and taking every medicine that the most eminent among the faculty could prescribe, was completely recovered after taking only two five shilling bottles of Dosemwell's preparation, which his wife said had done him a world of good."

"Far from it, my dear. I have not the remotest doubt but that Mr. Humphrey Digges recovered after taking these two bottles of miracle-water, or that his wife said they had done him a world of good; but still there is no reason why I should, on that account, run headlong into the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, as the logicians say, or, to reduce it to English, to believe that, because he recovered after taking the water, *ergo* on account of it."

"And why not, Mr. Hamilton?" asked the medicineress.

"Because it seems much more probable to such a sceptic as I am, that the various remedies which he had taken during the fourteen weeks previous to the application of the miracle-water, were not prevented from taking their proper effect through the harmlessness of the doctor's wonderful preparation."

"Well, my dear, it is no use trying to persuade you. The whole of the bills amount to ninety-eight five and threepence halfpenny, so I have to give you—"

"Nothing, my dear—keep the rest for the next occasion;—but, to

return to whence we went off after Dr. Keats, the chicken-broth, and Dosemwell's water, I am very glad to hear you agree with me in wishing young Middleton back again with us."

"Back again with us, Mr. Hamilton!—How can you stoop so over that frame, Margaret?—it makes you so red in the face! Just run up into my room, and run over this list of the last week's washing, and see if everything is correct; I will come up to you directly."

Margaret took the long paper, and with a half-suppressed sigh, and look at her father full of expression, left the room.

"Back again with us!" reiterated Mrs. Hamilton, as she closed the door after Margaret—"how can you think so?"

"Why, my dear, I intend inviting him to Hethersett for a month this long vacation; it will do his health good, and enable him to keep up his reading with Gerard, who, Davis tells me, has constituted himself his free gratis private tutor."

"Of course, my dear, you may ask any one you think fit to Hethersett, but really you cannot know what sort of person young Mr. Middleton is."

"All I know," replied the old gentleman, "is, that he is of a much better family than ours, fallen into misfortune through the villainy of his relations; that, at the risk of his own life, he saved dear Margaret from a watery grave; that he is the most valued friend of our Gerard, whose opinion goes very far with me; and that, during his late residence with us, his patient endurance of his afflictions, his gentle demeanour, his heartfelt thankfulness, and his pious resignation in the hour of his expected death, and the whole of his sufferings, have made me regard him as a second son."

"And your daughter to regard him as her future husband" interposed Margaret's mother. "Is it not so, Mr. Hamilton?"

"It seems likely, my dear—very likely," was the calm reply.

"And with this staring you in the face, you propose locating him in the same house with her for a month?" asked his wife.

"Precisely so, my dear. I would rather have Spencer Middleton for a son-in-law than any young man who has at present come under my eye."

"Spencer Middleton your son-in-law!—a poor ruined man!—a concealed Papist! You astonish me, Mr. Hamilton!" exclaimed Margaret's mother. "Would you throw away your daughter on a beggar?"

"Rather than sell her to the highest bidder. Were it, as is too often the case, the fact, that Margaret was as poverty-stricken as her young preserver, or had but the poor portion of one of many daughters to look for, I would then join with you in throwing every reasonable impediment in the way of her forming an attachment for one to whom she could not expect to be united until years had crept over them both."

Mrs. Hamilton nodded her approbation.

"I would do so, my dear, as a charitable act towards the young people, not as an act of matrimonial worldly policy;—I would do it to prevent the heart-sickness which followeth on hope deferred."

Mrs. Hamilton signalled her disapprobation.

"Should it appear to me, in such a case, that my interference was too late to prevent the ill-fated attachment, then would it be my duty, and I hope my pride and pleasure, to strive my utmost to accelerate the completion of their hopes, and to debar myself from many of my daily luxuries, to enable them to attain to that happiness which the marriage state *can* afford."

Mrs. Hamilton still held her peace.

"But when, my dear, on the one side are good birth, noble feelings, a bold heart which feareth no danger, abilities such as may command for themselves respect if foiled of reward, and poverty which bringeth no disgrace on the wearer; on the other side, my guileless, tender-hearted child, owing her life to the poverty-stricken lover, raised not only above all fear of want or distress, but to affluence, through the kindness of her dear godmother—so far from casting an impediment in the way, I glory in lending my assistance to furthering the pleasant progress of love."

"But, my dear, consider the extraordinary nature of his opinions on religious subjects—his concealed papistry," interposed Mrs. Hamilton.

"I am at a loss to understand you, my dear."

"On the first morning after his convalescence, he desired Margaret to read to him the Morning Service, and refused to use any other prayers but those in the Prayer Book, though I offered him the 'Holy and Pious Meditations of the Reverend Jabeziah Muddlepatte.'"

"The Socinian interpreter at Lower Hethersett," interrupted Mr. Hamilton.

"And 'Ephraim Goodenough's Satan's Bill dismissed in Hell's Chancery, with costs,'" continued his lady wife.

"The said Ephraim being—if I remember rightly—an independent expounder in Moorfields."

"And preferred Laud and Andrews to Wesley and Whitfield, and has actually a cross—"

"Stay, stay, my dear, you are going too fast; let us not now reopen old discussions—suffice it to say, he is no more a papist than your own husband, your own children; in charges of moment judge not from one or two points, and believe only on undeniable evidence. And should facts even then seem to bear you out in your suspicions, say to thyself, Who set me to be a judge over others? and bear in mind, that though there abideth faith, hope, and charity, the greatest of these is charity."

The conversation was here interrupted by the return of her whose probable lot had been its main topic, with satisfactory intelligence of the due and correct delivery of the various items of the washer-woman's all-important account. Close on her steps came the other subject of the discussion, our hero, the lately half-drowned Spencer, accompanied by his two friends, Gerard Hamilton and Tom Davis.

The short time that had elapsed since his nigh fatal leap, (though science and experience, combined with unremitting attention and tender care, had striven hard to efface the marks of the disease,) had not sufficed, even for the naturally strong constitution of Spencer Middleton, to shake off the languor of sickness. His once high spirits were almost broken beneath his multiplied cares and suffer-

ings, his tall manly form seemed but an attenuated skeleton, whilst the absence of its wonted brilliancy from his full blue eyes too clearly showed

“ The barbed arrow that rankled in his heart.”

The consequences of the irruption of the three friends were six well-defined hearty shakes of the hand, one cold chilling touching of digits, and two kisses. The first six greetings were divisible between three to Davis, two to Spencer, one to Gerard. With the formal touching of the palms the old lady condescended to greet her daughter's “ life-preserver,” as Tom had christened our hero. Between Gerard, his mother, and his sister, the two affectionate kisses were shared. And there can be little doubt but that had the actual inflicter of the salutations been too fatigued to have performed his osculatory duty to the fair Margaret, he might have easily obtained a proxy for the due performance of the act from either of his inseparable friends.

“ This is an unexpected pleasure, Mr. Davis ; we thought you were speechifying to the free and enlightened electors of the borough of Riverley,” remarked Mr. Hamilton.

“ Why, so I had intended, but we thought—that is, Gerard and Spencer did—that it would be better for me to be japanned before I started in full fig.”

“ Japanned, Mr. Davis ?” asked Gerard's father, with an expression of surprise.

“ Japanned, Mr. Davis !” exclaimed Gerard's mother, with a look of curiosity.

“ Japanned, Mr. Davis !” said Margaret in alarm.

“ Nothing when you are accustomed to it, I can assure you, Miss Hamilton, as the fishmonger observed when he crimped the cod-fish,” said Tom with a grave face.

“ Come, come, Tom,” said Margaret's brother, “ none of your tricks on travellers ; confess to its being only a cant term for being batchelorized.”

“ Or,” replied the incorrigible Tom, “ to state it as Gerard would—that is mathematically—B.A. equals japanning, M.A. equals dry rubbing, and Doctor equals polishing.”

“ Really I must interdict the future M. P.'s visits,” remarked Mr. Hamilton, with an intendedly grave face, “ if he teaches my daughter such pretty phrases as japanning, dry rubbing, and polishing.”

“ Pure Saxon, Mr. Hamilton—pure unadulterated Saxon ; if I had but time, I could prove their genealogy as clearly as Horne Tooke did that of Charlemagne, from the Greek pronoun *οσπερ*. O it is a fine science philology.”

“ Upon my honour, Davis, you are incorrigible,” said Gerard Hamilton ; “ come back to your original errand.”

“ A thousand pardons, Miss Hamilton ; I am deputed, as the unworthy coxswain of the St. Luke's boat—how we did bump the Peterites, Spencer !—to convey to you, as the unremitting and tender nurse of their bold stroke—that will do, I think, Spencer ?—their heartfelt gratitude and thanks for being the means of his being restored to his old place, nearly ready for another race : pray don't thank

me, Miss Hamilton ; I'm but a mere vehicle, as the cab observed—a mere vehicle of the thanks of the crew, the College, and a good part of the University—not the Peterites, I calculate—to the young lady who nursed the captain of the river.”

“ I think it is we, Mr Davis, to thank the captain for his exertions, and his crew for their timely assistance, when our young lady chose her free gratis cold-bath. But really young ladies now-a-days do blush so deeply, that the sooner we change the subject the better,” said Mr. Hamilton.

“ Ah that was my case in my early years,” observed Tom Davis.

“ How do things look at Riverley, Mr. Davis ? how goes the good cause ?” inquired Mrs. Hamilton, with a degree of interest which arose more from the fact of Tom's having given her a fresh recipe for bottling gooseberries, than from any love for the opinions for which the battle was to be fought.

“ Externally, rather badly ; the Mowbrayites have got the Unitarian preacher, two attorneys, a drum, two fifes, one apothecary, three publics, a fiddle, one mayor, fourteen aldermen, and a round dozen of private tutors.”

“ Private tutors, Mr. Davis !” exclaimed Mrs. Hamilton ; “ what can they have to do with the election at Riverley ?”

“ Just as much as they have to do with every election in the kingdom. Did you ever travel in Yorkshire, Mrs. Hamilton ? Well, when the horses make a stop at a bad piece of gravel, or a hill, ‘ Joe,’ shouts the driver, ‘ bring the private tutor ;’ whereupon down jumps Joe the guard, and comes forward with a short knotty whip, set on a long handle, runs by the sides of the horses, and applies the private tutor to their flanks—it is worth twice as much as the ears for a couple of mile of gravel.”

“ The ears for a couple of mile of gravel !” exclaimed Mr. Hamilton in astonishment.

“ An old saying and doing of Black Will, when any one used to say, ‘ Will, why don't you touch them up on the ears ?’ ‘ Take my advice, sir,’ he'd say ; ‘ take my advice—you'll thank me for it afterwards—always save your ears for a couple of miles of gravel.’ ”

“ But still, Mr. Davis,” said Margaret, “ I do not quite comprehend the application of these private tutors to electioneering.”

“ Arguing from analogy—Gerard will tell you what that is—if a short whip with a long handle, alias a private tutor, is of great effect in persuading a half-dead stager to move out of a walk up Malton-hill—ergo, from analogy, a short bludgeon with a neat little head, in the hands of a well-dosed, well-paid chairman, or Irish hodman, is no bad assistant in persuading an unwilling voter to come up at once, and an over-zealous opponent to keep in-doors, and not venture up to the poll.”

“ How stands my dear cousin ?” inquired Spencer, as soon as the party had composed their countenances and minds after Tom's learned lecture.

“ Your dear cousin is a pretty considerable scamp—and if he does not go to —— the next hottest place after Gibraltar, why, as Sambo said, ‘ there is no use in having a lieutenant-governor of Hades ;’ Sambo used shorter terms—”

"Well, but, Davis, how does he stand?" inquired Spencer, in hopes of bringing Tom back to his subject.

"O, he musters tolerably strong; one Wesleyan, two aldermen, a trumpet, three black fiddlers, one attorney, one physician, and one parish clerk, a pair of cymbals, four publicans, and a fair band of private tutors, under the command of his friend and ally Mark Redmond."

"An old companion of his pocket-picking and smuggling doings, is he not?" asked Mr. Hamilton.

"The son of a gardener on the estate, who ran away with him to London, and was supposed to have been his seducer from my uncle's house," replied Spencer.

"Take care how you say that now," replied Davis; "it is no longer Mark Redmond the gardener's son, but Captain Redmond, late of the Polish dragoons, with some two thousand a year, got no one knows how, a snug shooting-box, a good hunter and smart buggy, and smarter footman to match."

"And now, Mr. Davis, may I ask you how the good cause goes on?" said the old gentleman, almost afraid of Tom's running so far ahead as not to be able to check him back to his first start.

"Fairly, in sober truth, miserably, as we report—that is our plan—no show—only the public—no band—working quietly like moles—keeping up the rivalry between the two radicals, hoping, when thieves fall out, that we honest men may come to our own," replied the embryo member.

"I only hope you may be as successful, Davis, in Riverley, as I have been in London," said Gerard, quietly unfolding a very official-looking letter.

"In what, Gerard?" inquired all the rest of the party.

"O, I have got that tutorship at St. Ethelred's college; there, my father, is the secretary's letter—it is very satisfactory," replied Gerard, as he, with his accustomed coolness of demeanour, handed the opened letter to his father.

"God bless you, my dear Gerard; I do believe you deserve your good fortune," exclaimed the old gentleman, as his over-excited feelings escaped in a fervent shake of his son's hand.

"My dear Gerard, you are a most fortunate person—most fortunate—you will be quite close to Doctor Dosemwell in London, and you can send me down his aqua at any time you are sending a parcel, or coming yourself, which will save me heavy carriage."

"Dear brother!" said Margaret; "dear brother!" she repeated, as with her hand clasped in his she looked up in his face with a mixed expression of love and respect.

"Let me congratulate you, Gerard," said Spencer, with a downright grasp.

"I don't know whether I shall congratulate you, Mr. Gerard Hamilton," said Davis, putting on an intendedly severe air; "to think of your keeping that letter in your pocket five hours and a half, and taking six hundred a year, besides cheatings, as the American consul said, as coolly as an invalid would his three hundred and twenty-first emetic. But come, on second thoughts, I think I will—on one condition, that you all come over to Newnham to-day, and celebrate the new tutorage."

"And the embryo member at the same time," said Spencer.

"That is as it may be; but how say you, Mr. Hamilton? you agree—and the ladies? O, Middleton answers for one—very well—and I think I may for the other—very well. You cannot, alias shall not, pull, Spencer—sit and steer;—well then, self, Hamilton—make him stroke—the new tutor—Cottrell and Melton a quiet set—get a six, four oars, room for sitters—Hamilton, you send down the furnishings, and do not forget the diggs."

"Diggs, Mr. Davis?" inquired Mrs. Hamilton, with a mixed feeling of curiosity and alarm.

"Only the forks, madam, very necessary accompaniments—last party had to eat with skewers made out of the spare stretcher of the boat—sad case. Miss Hamilton, may I request you to resume your place of nurse over Spencer—he is not to be trusted yet alone. Come, Gerard, off to college about the furnishings—Spencer, bring down the ladies to Davis in half an hour—good-bye to all, good-bye—I'm off to the boat-house." And so speaking, or rather rattling, away went the good-hearted Tom on his Newnham errand, whilst Hamilton, having received another hint about the diggs on leaving the entrance of the house, went contrariwise to Davis in search of the college cook, a scout, and a hamper.

During the Newnham expedition, which, like all its family and acquaintance, was concluded by a heavy shower of rain, as much noise was made, as much nonsense talked, as much cold fowls, ham and chicken-pie discussed, as many bottles and glasses broken, as are absolutely necessary for the proper enjoyment of a pic-nic.

Spencer Middleton steered very badly; his errors were all on one side—Margaret Hamilton sat on the starboard side of the cutter.

Margaret Hamilton was the perfection of what is called a fine girl; her figure was tall and commanding, her features bold but not masculine, her bearing graceful, but firm and decided; whilst her dark lustrous eye, raven locks, high forehead, and pearly teeth, marked her for a beauty. And yet, had you taken her features separately, the examination would have proved far from satisfactory. See them when lighted up with her brilliant smile, in the blaze of a crowded ball-room, and then freely and unhesitatingly admit her to be a beauty. A good heart, a good temper, a good understanding, and a well-ordered mind, were the adornments which death alone could hope to destroy.

It would not only be tiresome, but almost impossible, to give you an idea of the various topics which were touched upon during the voyage. Politics, religion, love, law and physic, education and architecture, all passed in order. One anecdote retailed by Davis, relating to education; and one conversation about love and matrimony, must be re-tailed. Because, peradventure, the one may make the pudding eatable, the other threw a light on our story.

"Our Sunday-schools are an honour to England—a blessing to our country," said Mr. Hamilton.

"Certainly, sir," replied Tom, slacking his rate of rowing, "they tend to throw a new light on many portions of the scriptures, and to illustrate the moral feelings with which our nature is adorned."

"I cannot see how," remarked Gerard Hamilton.

"The power of secondary motives to influence our actions is constantly being illustrated in every Sunday-school in England, and indeed in every school where every kind of reward, from ten guineas worth of books to tea and buns once a quarter, is substituted, as an incitement to learning, instead of acquiring knowledge for knowledge sake," said Davis, with a most philosophic countenance.

"Something like rowing to Sandford for hot tankard and skittles, instead of for the exercise or the practising," observed Spencer.

"Precisely so, Spencer," was Tom's sober reply.

"But the new lights thrown by them on the scriptures—to what do you allude, Mr. Davis?" asked Mrs. Hamilton, totally unconscious of Tom's joke.

"New interpretations eliminated by the young mind subjected to the scholastic training."

"Of what kind, Mr Davis?" asked the old lady, amid the hardly concealed smiles of the party.

"Such as Giles Scroggins' improvement of the Parable of the Prodigal."

"Improvement—ah, I have often heard dear Mr. Goodenough improve on that subject."

"No doubt, ma'am—and so did Giles Scroggins—at once combining the leading principles of political economy and scriptural interpretation."

"Can you remember his view of the case, Mr. Davis?" inquired his victim, eagerly hunting for her pocket-book, in which to note down the new reading.

"Slack a little, master Gerard, while I comply with your mother's request, and endeavour to recall the elaborate disquisition of Giles Scroggins."

It wanted not such an appeal from Tom the Story-teller to reduce the stroke to a quiet paddle, in order that all might hear and profit by the wondrous relation.

"Giles Scroggins," said the relator—(a very pretty word in a story, but not so pleasing at the head of a charity information)—

"Giles Scroggins was the only son of old Giles Scroggins, factotum to the parish of Wittingham cum Skillingham in Northamptonshire, when but a few weeks old, his round fair face, galidaceous eyes, embonpoint form, too clearly demonstrated the depth of his intellect, the resources of his brain. His youthful genius was primarily developed by one Martha Drivel, the learned head of a dame-school in the village. When, however, the cares of agricultural labour compelled his unwilling parents to deny him the pleasure of a daily course of education, the Sunday-school of his village was his only refuge. It chanced not long since that the lesson of the day was the story of the Prodigal: according to his wont, the Rev. Mr. Cresett the clergyman, previous to Morning Service, proceeded to question the pupils, the young gentlemen of the Sunday-school, concerning the facts of that delightful history. Pursuing the rotation system, it fell to the lot of Giles Scroggins to answer this question, 'When the Prodigal son was entirely destitute, what did he do next?' Giles hesitated to reply. Mr. Cresett repeated his question. Still no reply. Mr. Cre-

sett retraced the various steps of the miserable man's career, his departure from his father's house, his wasting of his property, his grateful acceptance of the degrading office of a swineherd, his satisfying his appetite on the husks. 'And now when he was quite destitute,' continued Mr. Cresett, 'what did he do next—where did he go?' 'I suppose,' murmured Giles, with that meek low voice with which true worth ever puts forth its abilities, 'I suppose he went to his parish.'

The unsuspected conclusion of Davis's anecdote so violently affected the risible nerves of Gerard as to render his stroke anything but correct; but this was a fault Tom never did and never could overlook; assuming to himself his old place of coxswain, his voice was soon heard above the laughter of the party, recalling the truant leader to his work, with many a word of reproof and good advice for the future.

"One would almost suppose you were in love," he said to Gerard.

"Love, my dear fellow—why, I have no right to be in love yet," replied Hamilton.

"No right?" said his father and his sister at the same time.

"No—what right have I to be engaging the affections of any girl, when I cannot expect to settle these five or six years?"

"Surely," replied Margaret, "if the lady pleases to have her affections engaged to you, you are perfectly at liberty to bind yourself and her to love one another, with a true faith, until fortune may allow you to be united."

"Far from it," replied her brother. "I know you young ladies delight in long courtships; in my idea they are very selfish matters. What right have I, or any one in my situation, to pay such devoted attention to a lady as to engage her love, to prevent her from settling in the world with some one else, much better suited to her than I am, much more her match perhaps in every respect?"

"If the old theory of the wife being the half that was originally torn from the perfect body is true, and our course after a mate is but a recovering of our complement, which is required for the due developement of our happiness—how is it possible for the lady to be happy with any one but the person who has engaged her affections?"

"Though I cannot say, Spencer, that I think the theory worth refutation, yet let me give you my idea about the impossibility of the young lady whose affections are engaged being happy with any one else than the person to whom she is betrothed."

"Come, Gerard," said his father, "do not develope your woman-hating notions."

"Woman-hating, my dear father—far from that—it is entirely from my desire of not sacrificing women to the self-love of those who flatter themselves that the dear Emma or Matilda could not be happy with any one but their own sweet self, that I make a point of declaring my opinion at every opportunity."

"In my idea, Gerard, you are theoretically right; and what is more, could human nature allow us to reduce your theory to practice, and to abstain from pouring out our vows at the altar of our affections, long, long before we can hope to be united to our lady-love, we should

not only escape much misery ourselves, but relieve those for whom we pretend to feel so acutely from a long life of anxiety and unrequited love."

"Depend upon it, it is not real love that prompts us to bind down an unsuspecting, open-hearted girl to waste the best years of her life for us ; it is mere selfishness, originating from a false opinion of ourselves. We will flatter ourselves we are (as the ancients said) the complement of the broken figure, when, in reality, we are but one out of the many who would render the fabled form as complete, if not more so than ourselves."

"You may argue, Gerard, you may theorize, as long as you please," replied his sister, "but as long as we have hearts, and men are flatterers, you will not stem the tide of long attachments, and I pray you never may."

"I perfectly agree with you, Miss Hamilton," said Spencer—"perfectly. What is more ennobling to the feelings, more purifying to the passions, than a devoted attachment—a beacon-star through dangers and distresses, to guide us to our haven, to encourage us to bear up even under the most trying misfortunes?"

Here the striking of the bow of the cutter against a shoal interrupted the conversation, which being far too serious for Davis, and not practical enough for Mrs. Hamilton, was not renewed during the expedition. Its effect on our hero—that is, the effect of Margaret's declaration—was most powerful ; more consolatory than twenty of the largest family bottles of Mr. Hamilton's dear friend and ally Dr. Dosemwell's preparation of aqua punpuginis. When our hero took leave of the Hamiltons on the following morning, he was one more instance of the truth of Margaret's declaration : peradventure he had in his mind Jacob de Voragine's twelve reasons for matrimony, and therefore as its proper antecedent for falling into love.

"If thou hast means," says old Jacob, "thou hast one to keep and increase them.

"Hast thou none—thou hast one to help thee to get some.

"Art thou in prosperity—she will double it.

"Art thou in adversity—she will comfort thee, assist thee, bear part.

"Art thou at home—she will drive away melancholy.

"Art thou abroad—she will pray for thee, wish for thee to be at home, welcome thee with joy.

"Nothing is delightful alone—no society is equal to marriage.

"The bond of conjugal love is adamant.

"Kindred is increased, parents doubled—brothers, sisters, families, nephews.

"Thou art a father by a legal and happy issue.

"Barren matrimony is cursed by Moses ; how much more a single life!

"If nature escapes not punishment, thy will shall not avoid it, as he sang it, that

"Earth, air, sea, land, full soon will come to nought,
The world itself would be to ruin brought."

CHAPTER XIV.

Preparations are made for the election of Riverley.

THE town of Riverley was suffering under excitement. From the window of the Middleton Arms hung out a flaunting yellow banner, the ensign of the squire's party, having on its folds, Liberty and Equality, and no Corn Laws. Every brick of the house contributed to the support of one or more square yards of thin paper, disfigured with such appeals, as "Vote for the poor man's friend—Middleton for ever—no Corn Laws—Cheap Bread—Reform—Annual Parliaments—Vote by Ballot." The candidate on this side the market-place stood on the thoroughgoing Radical interest. Underneath the windows and round about the doors of the old house stood a motley group of seven-shillings-a-day supporters, whose particular orders were to cheer their own man, mob the other side, and pelt the parsons.

Vis-à-vis to the yellow flag was the blue and buff banner of the Mowbrays, suspended from the balcony of the Liberia Hotel. The legend was "Reform and Retrenchment. The people the true source of legitimate power—Representative Reform, Freedom of Election, Abolition of Taxation," were the baits offered by the Buffs and Blues to their supporters. Unlimited supplies of ale, porter, and gin, contributed to keep alive the enthusiasm of the *ni l'une, ni l'autre* party, whilst the well-led staves of their private tutors contributed to the due keeping in order of their own refractory voters, and the intimidation of their opponents.

Such were the central committee-rooms of the two liberal parties, whose sub-committees infested every hole and corner of the town.

As for the constitutional party, it was difficult to discover their whereabouts; their existence might almost be doubted, were it not for certain large posters, still half visible under the yellow and blue and buff papers, which, when entire, informed the independent freemen of Riverley of the fact of Mr. T. Davis being a candidate for the honour of representing them in parliament. Indeed, in a bye-street there might be seen a house with one or two announcements in its windows, of the fact of Mr. Davis's committee sitting there daily—a fact religiously believed by those few who hoped to have an opportunity of registering their votes in favour of the good cause, and equally disbelieved by both parties of the liberals.

The electors of the borough of Riverley and its liberties were its corporation and freemen, some two hundred in all. In the previous contests, when the houses of Middleton and Mowbray led the opposing bands, the numbers were so equal that the contest had been generally decided by an elegant band of a dozen low voters, who waited on Providence and voted for the highest bidder, or compromised by each family returning one member. The latter alternative had been resorted to at the last election, and the honourable Augustus Fox Mowbray and one Sir Thomas Beacham represented the borough of Riverley, and the interest of the Mowbrays and Middletons.

The change of the lord at the hill had been hailed with delight by the Mowbrays. He had declared himself on their side—at least one able to be comprehended under the large class of liberals: both seats

were now safe for their side, for who, said my lord, can oppose the united interests of Middleton and Mowbray ?

Now it happened at this time, that a certain place in the ministry of the day—as we are not going to be political, our friends must not require a more particular description—was vacant by the death of an old Whig—they are not to be found now like the Dodo, only the claw left as a curiosity. This place must be filled—that was the rub ; parties ran rather too equal in the house to be pleasant, or to allow either side to play tricks, so his Majesty refrained from filling up the place, for the good of his prime minister.

“ My dear fellow,” said the primus when the Duke of Chink’s eldest son, Lord Hardup, applied for the place, “ your seat is not safe.”

“ D—n my constituents !” replied his lordship.

“ Precisely so,” said the minister.

“ My dear lord,” said the Hon. Augustus Mowbray, “ that place would just suit me.”

“ Not a doubt of it,” said the First Lord of the Treasury, “ but you only got in last time by a compromise.”

“ Things are changed, my lord ; the old Tory is dead, and one of our side has succeeded to his place and property, so that both seats are safe.”

“ That alters the case materially,” replied the minister ; “ you shall have it.”

So his Majesty was pleased to appoint the Hon. Augustus Mowbray to the vacant place.

The Hon. Augustus had told only a part of the truth ; he omitted the episode of the drag-net.

The day of the nomination drew on—all parties began to count heads. To begin with my lord’s son’s friends, they were in high feather ; seventy-five promises appeared in their books ; they had never started with so many before : they forgot that they had never before canvassed so closely.

Then came the squire’s account, sixty good and true men, averaging about ten pounds a head, decidedly bargains, and so precious that fifteen of them were kept under lock and key at the central committee-room, lest gold and brandy should charm away their hearts. The Mowbray party were all my lord’s tenants, the squire’s, but few of the Middleton tenantry, some fifteen to twenty, whose short term and poor means did not permit them to brave the squire’s anger ; the rest were the few thorough-bred radicals of the town, and the elegant extracts who generally waited on Providence, but who now sided with the squire for a *consideration*.

Slowly, quietly, and steadily, had the constitutional party worked ; no show, no expense, no blustering ; their own organ, the county paper, spoke most despairingly of their prospects. “ There was, indeed, a chance,” the editor said, “ but it was but a poor one.” “ Nil desperandum” was indeed their motto, but the intimidation of the lords of the land was too powerful to be resisted. With such deplorations as these, Davis’s friends contrived to turn away the attention of their opponents from their proceedings. Their prospects were not really

so gloomy ; could they but keep alive the enmity of the other parties, they might hope to run them both close. They mustered fifty-five good and true men, willing to run every risk, endure any trouble, and risk some expense, rather than allow so fair an opportunity to escape them of rescuing the borough from the hands of the so-called Liberals.

The present squire's predecessors had full and great confidence in the characters of their tenants, and in their willingness to merge private differences of opinion in support of those to whom they looked, and not in vain, for assistance and consolation, when sorrow, poverty, or sickness fell on any of them. The lords of Mowbray had no confidence in their tenants, and justly. So the one granted long leases at good rents, the others yearly tenancies at low ones ; when, therefore, the power at the Hill changed hands, the tenantry did not change their opinions so readily as the squire might have hoped ; it had taken many lives of good men in succession to fix their principles in the hearts of their tenantry. And now that the powerful inducement of intimidation had lost all its terrors from the kindness of the last squire, it was no easy matter to make the Middleton tenantry swerve from their old opinions.

"Good morning to you, Mr. Silverley," said Dr. O'Clysterall the physician, who lived on the Mowbray side of the market-place, now chairman of the Honourable Augustus's committee, and leader of a band of canvassers which included the *Rev.* Ebenezer Blackhair, the Wesleyan minister, two aldermen, and an attorney, who now took the opportunity of waiting on Mr. Silverley for his vote and interest in favour of the Honourable Augustus Mowbray.

"Good morning to you, Dr. Clysterall—good morning to you, gentlemen," replied the owner of the beautiful mansion, in the library of which the party were assembled.

"My good friends and myself"—here the party bowed in unison—"have come more from respect to one who so long and so ably has supported the cause of civil and religious liberty, than from any doubt as to which party in the ensuing contest will be enabled, through your assistance, to acquire the honour of the representation of Riverley. May we solicit the vote and interest of the father of the Whigs in this county, for the Honourable Augustus Mowbray, whom his majesty has been pleased to appoint one of his under-secretaries of state?"

"Surely, gentlemen," replied the old gentleman, "this visit was unnecessary—you must be well aware that my political opinions—"

"Precisely so, Mr. Silverley," interrupted Dr. Clysterall.

"Precisely so," chorused the entire deputation.

"Have undergone considerable alteration since the last election."

"Alteration, Mr. Silverley !" gasped the doctor.

"Alteration," chorused the deputation.

"Yes, gentlemen, considerable alteration."

"Surely, Mr. Silverley," said the *Rev.* Ebenezer Blackhair, "you will not vote for the Papist squire—the old Tory's descendant?"

"Were Mr. Middleton," calmly replied the voter, "the representative of the opinions of his family as well as of their possessions, I

should have undoubtedly registered my vote for him at the approaching election."

"O, you've turned Tory, have you?" growled Dr. Clysterall.

"I am no longer a Whig, and am not likely to be a Radical," replied Mr. Silverley.

"Ah, that's all very well," began the doctor, getting into a rage.

"Nay, nay, doctor," said the Wesleyan minister; "nay, nay, allow me to ask *my* old friend why he has deserted *his* old friends?"

"It would be a long story, Blackhair—too long for the present opportunity."

"Nay, nay, Silverley, you can sum up in some short sentence—some short declaration."

"Well then, Blackhair, look out of that window—what do you look on?—the old estate on which my fathers were bred and born, never as yet burdened with debt, or enfeebled by mortgage; I wish to keep it so, and at the rate you are now going, in ten years' time where would it be? Good morning to you, gentlemen—I hope to be the first to poll for the Tory on Tuesday. Good morning."

"Mr. Smith at home, young man?" asked Alderman Spindle of the Middleton baker's chief assistant, as, head of the squire's committee, he led his select band of canvassers round the market-place.

"O, good morning, Mr. Smith—Mrs. Smith quite well?—and all the little Smiths?—That's right. We have come, Mr. Smith, to solicit your vote and interest for the old family. A mere matter of form, I am sure—never saw such unanimity among the tenantry before—did you ever, Sneer?"

"Never," said the Unitarian preacher.

"I am very sorry, gentlemen, to have given you so much trouble, but I am afraid that I shall not be able to vote for Squire Middleton."

"Not vote for the squire!" exclaimed Mr. Spindle.

"Not vote for civil and religious liberty!" exclaimed Mr. Sneer.

"Not vote for no corn laws!" screamed Mr. Steampower the manufacturer.

"No, Mr. Steampower," replied the baker, "I shall not vote for no corn laws, because, setting aside the right to protection which the farmers have as well as you manufacturers, I have no wish to reduce the poor man to no-corn-law wages."

Mr. Steampower looked disgusted at the poor man's ignorance.

"As for civil liberty, I can now do what I like, so I transgress not the law—and for other liberty than that I am not anxious; as for religious liberty, I hardly comprehend its meaning."

"It is the liberty of prophesying against the idolatrous practices and brutal tyranny of a bloated church!" exclaimed Mr. Sneer.

"Which I presume means the permission to abuse the clergy, and disseminate every blasphemous notion, unrestrained by the arm of the law," replied Mr. Smith.

"As for voting for the squire, Mr. Spindle, I should have been glad to have voted for one so much my superior in rank and wealth and from whom and whose ancestors I have received great kindness, and with whose family I have been proud to vote these thirty years;

but, on your own principle of civil liberty, you must respect those opinions which for thirty years I have held."

"You must not be surprised, Mr. Smith, if your old friends desert you if you desert them—not that I mean to say that the squire will not extend his patronage even to his opponents, but still friends first is but fair play."

"All which means, Mr. Spindle," coolly replied the baker, "that unless I vote for the squire, or abstain altogether from voting, I may as well send in my bill to the hall, and strike the name of Middleton out of my books."

"I am sure I never said so," said the alderman.

"Because you hardly dared, Mr. Spindle—but you meant it. Perhaps I may not vote at all."

"You'll remember, Mr. Smith," said Sneer, "he that is not for us is against us."

"Yes, the devil can quote scripture when it suits him; I shall certainly vote for Mr. Davis. Anything more, gentlemen, that I can do for you? Good morning."

That evening Smith went to the quiet committee-room in the back street, and tendered his vote to the constitutional party.

"We are exceedingly obliged to you, Smith," said the vicar, who generally came down of an evening to see how matters were going; "but will you not be injured by voting for us?"

"Perhaps I may be, sir; but I hope I know my duty—I would rather live on dry bread than vote against my church and my king."

"Well, Smith," said Silverley, "if you are turned out of your house come to me—Silverley still owns a house or two in the town."

"Many thanks, sir," replied Smith; "turn me out they cannot—the old squire renewed my lease about three months before he died; they can but strike me out of the steward's books at the hall, and get their bread from Peterson. However, they won't ruin old Smith quite so easily as they think. Good night, gentlemen—I will be forthcoming when I am wanted. Success to the old cause!"

The nomination of the candidates was cousin-german to every nomination that has taken place in our time. The Red party occupied one side of the hustings and the market-place, the Buffs the other side, whilst squeezed up behind the mayor's place stood Davis, his proposer and seconder, the entire representatives of the Blue party on the hustings. Among the crowd not a Blue bow was to be seen. But there could not be a doubt that certain stout honest-looking forms and faces, dotted here and there among the parties, belonged neither to the Reds nor the Buffs. These represented the Blues among the crowd of the market-place.

The mayor opened the day by informing the people of the object of their meeting, of the fact of his most gracious Majesty having been pleased to appoint their late member to be one of the under-secretaries of state, of the consequent vacancy in the representation, of the new writ, and of the present meeting. He then desired all parties to give fair play to one another, and hear all the gentlemen had to say, made his bow amid unanimous cheers, and retired from the front centre.

Ebenezer Blackhair then came forward amid the discordant yells of the Reds, and the equally discordant applause of the Buffs. After a considerable portion of pantomimic gestures, openings and shuttings of the mouth, violent flings about of the hands and arms, and mysterious pointings over his shoulder at the late member, he retired unscathed, and was charitably supposed by the mayor to have nominated the Honourable Augustus Mowbray as a fit and proper person to represent the borough of Riverley in Parliament.

To the Wesleyan succeeded Dr. O'Clysterall, who being an odd sort of character, and an Irishman to boot, would be heard, and was heard accordingly.

It was a very curious composition that self-same speech—so curious that trouble should have been taken to preserve it pure and unadulterated as it fell from the doctor's lips, had it not been for the daily new editions of it, with additions, emendations, and alterations, by various hands, which are being vomited forth in our sister isle at the condolence meetings now so rife at the Corn Exchange in Dublin. The Emerald Isle, its seven millions of bauld pisantry, tithes, tithe-proctors, fire-raising, agitation, the slave-trade, reform, the church, and the chimney-sweeps, passed in rapid succession through the doctor's speech, amid the cheers of the Buffs, and the mingled hisses and laughter of the Reds whenever the doctor betrayed his fatherland by a bull.

The nomination on the part of the Middletons and the Davises admitted of but one variation from that of their opponents. No one was heard. The well-tuned lungs of the Mowbrayites contrived most effectually to drown the cries of the Middleton nominator and seconder. How much greater, therefore—(see seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid)—how much greater, therefore, was the success of the united, for once united parties, against the two impudent Blues, who dared to nominate a Tory for Riverley?

At last the deed was done—the three candidates stood their proper and reasonable time in front of the hustings, during which time they were supposed to have spoken the three long speeches which graced, each, their own paper. The mayor took the show of hands, and giving his friends the benefit of the doubt, declared the election to have fallen on the Honourable Augustus Mowbray. Whereupon Alderman Spindle demanded a poll on behalf of George Middleton, Esq. amid the cheers of the Reds; and William Downright, maltster and freeman, demanded the same on the behalf of Thomas Davis, Esq., to the great amusement of both parties. The mayor, having declared the poll for ten o'clock on the morrow, all parties voted him their thanks, and having nothing better to do, the Reds and the Buffs got up an amateur Waterloo in the market-place, in which many oaths and more blows were given and received, a few windows broken, but no heads, more from the solidity of the capita than from the badness of the weapons, or weakness of those who wielded them in the fray.

Leaving all parties to prepare for the contest of the morrow—for according to old charter the election must be taken between the hours of ten and three in the day succeeding the nomination—let us con-

clude this chapter with a conversation accidentally overheard between one Dennis M'Shane and Ephraim Sneak, as they sat hobnobbing over brandy-and-water at the Three Periwinkles in Lower Stone Street, Riverley.

"M'Shane, I'm in a precious fix—take another glass of the liquor."

"What the devil's the row?" replied Dennis, mixing his glass on Mynheer Van Dunck's principle.

"Why, look'ee—there's a man as lives at Wellingborough as has got a paper, a great big deed, as would prove in a jiffy that Mister Middleton can't stand for a parliament member."

"How d'ye mean?"

"No qualification's the word, and so upset without any trouble."

"Humph!" replied Dennis.

"Well, now the man as will bring that here afore three o'clock to-morrow would get one hundred pounds from somebody as I knows of."

"Vell, why don'tee go for't?"

"Can't—that precious stone's nigh broke my leg—couldn't ride ten mile—much less nigh on to forty, and bad roads."

"Art sure all right?"

"All right as a trivet—overheard Spindle a talking about it to Sneer. Now, think's I, I'm agoing to vote for the squire, cause vhy?—I can't do otherwise—cause vhy? he's agoing to trot out all as won't wote for him."

"Vell," said Dennis, "shall I go?"

"Vhy, lookee—you is a Mowbray man, I'm a Middleton—vell, one wote wouldn't perhaps matter a bit, but still, if I could make more out of the lord than out of the squire, why I would——"

"Of course," said Dennis.

"Now, I know's one hundred down would be given for that deed, and mayhap more, if you fetch it—you're a Mowbray man, therefore it's all right—nothing said about who told you of it."

"Well?" said Dennis.

"Well then, I'll give you twenty down, and twenty more when you bring back the paper, if you'll ride off to-night to Wellingborough to Sam Patch's, and ask for a square parcel, directed to E. Sneak. You bring that here—take it to Blackhair—he's your head man—claim a hundred down, take twenty yourself, and give me the rest. I'll trust you."

"Make it twenty-five down."

"No, no," said Sneak, "twenty's enough—besides, I can't sell the squire for less than sixty."

"But what's to hinder my riding off, and not giving you nothing at all?"

"No, no—you won't do that," replied Sneak, to all appearance at a nonplus, "honour among——"

"Rogues," said Dennis; "make it twenty-five down, or I'm off on my own game."

"Very hard, Dennis; "but I suppose I must. Well, here's the money—come, are you ready?—Tom Gerard's horse is waiting for

me. Push him on to Allerton—that's fifteen miles. Go to Gerard's at the Bull, and ask for a horse ordered by me two days ago—that'll carry you to Postle, where Tom Patch will forward you to Wellingborough—have your relays ready to return, and do be back before the end of the poll to-morrow."

Ephraim Sneak got his man off.

"Come, come," said Ephraim to himself, "not so bad neither—he'll get to Gerard's. Well, Gerard'll send him to Postle, where, if he cannot make him stay, Tom'll forward him to his brother's; and if he gets back before three to-morrow, though he has forty-eight hours, I've no faith in a roughened saddle and bad roads."

Ephraim Sneak did not seem much to care about the chance of his friend's not being likely to return before the election was over.

Ephraim made an entry in his book—"To doctoring a man, forty pounds."

It was truly astonishing how many men left Riverley that night in search of square parcels, some directed to the chairman of the Reds, some to that of the Buffs, and others to such disinterested persons as our friend Ephraim Sneak.

HOW TO GET UP A PIC-NIC.

BY LEIGH CLIFFE, ESQ.

To get up a Pic-Nic with taste and effect,
A receipt from my grandmother's book I'll select,
As 'tis just now the season to boat it, and shiver
Like true human aspens while rowed up the river;
While your teeth chatter music, as though they were taking
A lesson from Grisi, and practising shaking,
And the wind blows around you so charmingly keen,
That winter seems placed, like a sandwich, between
Fading summer and autumn, while, pleasure to heighten,
You pick up *rheumatics* to bathe off at Brighton.

My grandmother writes, (she eloped, but we'll pardon her,
With the sexton this year, who is Mister Death's gardener,
In the prime of her life, for but sixty-nine years
Were the quantum allowed her in this vale of tears,)
"Collect so many persons, by courtesy *friends*,
Who've the organ of action, and can make both ends
Meet in one little circle, or can at least edit
Their tailor's account for a half year's more credit;
Who can tick it with Scott for champagne and tokay,
And buy port in the most economical way,
Pass Cape, with its "bacco-box" flavour, for fine
Ten years' bottled Xeres, and swear 'tis divine
As the Nectar that's quaff'd at state-dinners by Jove:—
And be sure get together all couples in love,
And widows, whose weeds, if soon *weeded*, would speak
In raptures of Pic-Nics that bring what folk seek."

You may sprinkle some widows, *unwidow'd*,—*id est*,
 Who have parted from convoy, like vessels, off Brest ;
 As 'tis not *infra dig.* you may too, if you please,
 Mix up in your medley a few *divorcees*,
 For there can be no harm, in arranging society,
 To include those who've purchas'd a known notoriety.
 Get some half-dozen *bleus*, a few actors from over
 The water,—some fiddlers, some singers,—moreover
 A play-wright or two, would be all very well,
 And a small Spanish Don who can cut a great swell ;
 But be sure that the man is *bestarr'd* and *beorder'd*
 And his lips with full curling moustachios bordered.
 If you can get a man with a *title*, exhibit him,
 And puff him, and praise him, and stuff him, *ad libitum*.
 If you could find a Jewess, with but little trouble,
 Whom you might, with some decency, pass as the *double*
 Of RACHEL, just veil her, and get up a scene,—
 As when *Marie* shows fight to old *Bessy* the Queen :—
 Let her stamp, shake her fist, snap her fingers, and stare,
 And do half the tragedy,—*minus* the prayer.
 Should her French be *patois*, and her accent not true,
 Keep her back till the men may be told black is blue ;
 And then, like a *coup de soleil*, she'll diminish
 The *ennui* that creeps on when dinner you finish,
 Bringing on, from the slumber to which it gives birth,
 A fine aldermanic third heaven on earth !
 Ventriloquists really are *passés* ;—the passion
 Is now to bring nothing but odd things in fashion :
 Learned horses and asses will tell well ;—before
 'Twas Arabs and Indians,—they're now thought a bore ;
 But the most novel thing which this season I've heard, is
 A *Duo Concertante* for two hurdygurdies.
 Have plenty of dancers, and try for JOHN PARRY,
 Whose "wanted a wife" may give hints that men marry,
 And *petites affaires du cœur* often will
 Make the fingers twine close in the second quadrille.

But I've not spoken yet of the funds—without money.
 Pleasure's hive would not swarm with the drones seeking honey ;
 Make it *cheap* to the eye—a mere nothing—so under
 Their *own* calculation, that men and girls wonder
 Why such economical parties were never,
 Red-letter'd, like saints' days, and Sundays, by clever,
 Concoctors of omens, and signs of the weather.
 The grand secret is this. Have some little additional
 Claims on each purse—for the *right* is traditional ;—
 Half-crowns for some ices, or white-bait ;—a trifle
 By way of subscription for poor Mistress Rifle,
 Who has *three living husbands*, all married before,
 And three children by each, and expecting one more ;
 Small extras for things which must never appear,
 And your pic-nic per centage will serve every year
 To replenish your purse at the close of the season,
 And your friends to remember you long will have reason."

MEMORIES OF GIBRALTAR.

No. V.

THE PLAGUE.

BY MRS. FRANCES ELIZABETH DAVIES.

It is always so much more pleasing to recal gay and romantic subjects than narratives which evoke sad memories, that it is not surprising that those of the plague of 18—, which, by chronological order, should have taken precedence of my former numbers, remain still untouched. Yet, as I intend these papers to be strictly records of real life, and as life is, at the best, but a mingled tale of pleasure and pain, so must I weave my varied web with threads, some dark, some bright, hoping that, when all is done, the fashion of the work may chance to win the favour of the public.

"Welcome, my dear Clara, a thousand times! I have such a beau for you! so prepare—not for conquest, that is achieved already—but to be conquered, for I assure you Captain Delorme is determined to assail your heart with all the strategy of war."

The speaker was the wife of Major Herbert, the person addressed was her guest, and, though some years her junior in age, had been one of her girlhood's friends.

"And who, pray, may be Captain Delorme?"

"Not to know Captain Delorme would indeed be to argue yourself unknown, were he not a new arrival in the garrison. Regimentally, I assure you he is a person of some importance, on account of his taste and admiration of our sex. He landed from Lisbon only yesterday, and is already smitten with a certain fair maiden, whom, it seems, he and the major encountered on the saluting battery—an ominous place, was it not?"

"Very," laughed Clara. "But I fear that I am somewhat ungrateful, for if the person I saw there yesterday be Captain Delorme, the impression which I received of him was by no means flattering to his self-love."

"Well, well, all in good time; the captain dines with us to-day, and you will have an opportunity of forming a more accurate estimate of his merits."

"But which, I suspect, is by no means likely to reach that which the captain's *amour propre* has established in his own opinion."

"You are severe;—but *allons*, time does wonders."

A more intimate acquaintance, however, with her admirer, failed to procure for Captain Delorme a better acceptance with his fair enslaver; and albeit that he wooed in downright earnest, consulting Clara's whims and propitiating her tastes with the most persevering assiduity, she continued to retreat from his attentions just as pertinaciously as the pursued—a coyness which, perhaps, acted as an additional provocative, and would doubtless have proved very charming, had it only been

what her adorer's amatory experience instructed him to believe it, i. e. merely feigned. But, unfortunately for him, what he intended for captivating advances, she construed into unauthorized persecution, thus deepening her unfavourable impressions, until what was at first a mere girlish caprice, soon became confirmed into permanent dislike.

If he appeared on the terrace during her promenade, it was not that she merely avoided him, but she literally ran away. She was passionately fond of flowers, and every morning he presented her a votive offering, culled from the choicest parterres; but they were destined to wither in her vases, untended for the sake of him by whom they had been selected.

And when her pet kid accidentally fell over a precipice, and was strangled by the cord that ought to have confined its rambles, "What a pity it was not the lamb!" she exclaimed, utterly forgetful of the cruelty of her remark in remembrance that the poor creature had been a gift from Delorme—an involuntary crime, however, for which, in her remorse, she received the unconscious animal into distinguished favour, upon which event the presumptuous lover founded so much hope, that he actually had the temerity to solicit a lock of her hair, a request that was most indignantly refused by Clara; and on subsequently discovering that he had surreptitiously obtained that favour through the instrumentality of her mother, who warmly favoured his suit, the angry girl burst into a passion of tears, and refused to be pacified until assured that her persecutor was on the wing for England.

"Where I trust he will remain, and that I may never again behold his ugly face!" she petulantly exclaimed.

"Fie, Clara!" replied her mother. I have explained to you a hundred times that the captain is an exceedingly eligible person, and nothing but your extreme youth can excuse your childish behaviour."

"I know I am a child," retorted Clara; "I don't want to be considered anything else. I neither care for eligible nor ineligible persons. I hate to be followed, and bored, and stared at, and quizzed, and tormented, and teased about him, an antiquated fright! Why cannot he go and jabber his nonsense to some old woman of his own age?"

"Foolish girl! have you no ambition to follow the example of your friend, Mrs. Herbert, and other girls of your acquaintance?"

"No, indeed! I would rather have a merry dance than listen to all the fine compliments that ever were paid. I *know* that I am a pretty girl—everybody says so, and so I suppose I am; but I don't want to be told that morning, noon, and night. I hate a person to be always goggling at me, and whispering, and making mysteries where there are none, and I should detest an Adonis if he were for ever dangling at my side—and as for Captain Delorme—"

"Well, well, child, the captain sails for England to-morrow, having obtained twelve months' leave of absence; when he returns, I trust you will be better able to appreciate the honour of his addresses."

"The honour of his addresses! Now really, mother, the daughter of Captain Belmore cannot be much elevated by such a distinction."

"Pshaw, child! go to your birds; there is no use in talking sense to a baby!"

Glad to be released from attentions so odious, Clara enjoyed renewed happiness after the departure of her admirer, who left her, vowing all the constancy and devotion that might have flattered a more experienced belle, but which was utterly lost upon the youthful despot; and from the hour when he breathed his farewell, he was as much forgotten by her as if such a person had never existed, or only recalled to her recollection by some mischievous friend, who laughingly inquired when she had heard from the captain, an incident which served to render his name still more disagreeable.

At intervals packages of new books and music arrived, with letters to Captain Belmore; for, egotistical as was the lover, he did not venture to address Clara herself, nor in his letters was she more than distantly mentioned, he well knowing that her father, a punctilious soldier of the old school, would have resented any avowed pretension to the hand of a girl so young. It was, therefore, only in very general terms that he mentioned his solicitude respecting the welfare of the family, and to Mrs. Belmore that all offerings of remembrance were presented.

Meanwhile Clara improved both mentally and personally, and soon learned to estimate her own pretensions—in fact, as her mother had shrewdly enough insinuated, twelve months wrought an amazing change with her in every respect, except in her appreciation of Captain Delorme; for when he returned, though she would no longer have run away from him, she had learned to repel the freedom of his advances without resigning an iota of her own dignity; and her very first act, when he presented himself before her, was to evince her preference for the conversation of a young naval beau, in so maliciously marked a manner, as sent him home to his quarters in a fit of jealousy or jaundice, which confined him to his bed for three days.

On the fourth he presented himself, armed for a gallant attack, in virtue of a pair of new wings and a formidable sable, which signaled his appointment to the command of the grenadier company—a cheap honour, which the governor (not General Don, be it understood,) had conferred as a reply in full to a whole budget of commendatory letters, by which the captain's influential friends designed to have secured for him some more solid advantage than the empty and most inappropriate distinction which they won for their protégé.

Of the ridicule which this appointment provoked, his excellency was quite unconscious, not being in the habit of dispensing those hospitalities which would have brought him into personal contact with his officers, and for which the government-house, under the succeeding *regime*, became so honourably remarkable. On Delorme's return from England, his excellency was indeed provided with an excellent apology for the exclusion of visitors, being confined to home by an illness which terminated in his decease. For these reasons, therefore, he remained quite unaware that the gentleman whom he had placed at the head of one of the finest grenadier companies in the service, was minus at least five inches of the standard of beauty; a circumstance of which Delorme did not think it requisite to ap-

prize him, for the simple reason that it would have been made difficult to have convinced himself, that his height was not the just medium between the ungainly tall and the insignificantly diminutive. Yet some suspicion of the true state of the case may have glanced through his mind upon his first muster of his new company, when he found himself placed in juxtaposition with his junior subaltern, who measured six feet four without his shoes, and whose gigantic stature was rendered still more conspicuous by the meagre lankness of his person, and the superabundant enormity of his huge grenadier cap.

The manner in which this singularly awkward looking personage used to bend down to receive the orders of his commanding officer was perfectly irresistible; and if any adjunct had been required to exhibit Delorme unfavourably to his lady love, the absurdity of his position would have supplied such a deficiency.

It was indisputable that the redoubted hero, Thomas Thumb, was most efficiently personated by Captain Delorme, who, nevertheless, quite unconsciously became the subject of the most comical and extravagant inventions. One story, which gained particular circulation, and even some belief—went, that on a general field-day, during a high wind, the subaltern's cap having fallen off, the grenadier captain was suddenly missed from his situation, and after some inquiry was discovered safely housed under the monstrous head-covering of his junior officer.

Happily the bump of self-esteem presents a most excellent preservative against the assaults of wit and wagery; and while the garrison was convulsed with laughter, Delorme simply added a little to the heels of his boots, and a little to the height of his cap—and then unflinchingly maintained his appointment,

Scarcely, however, was he fully installed in his new honours, before he took the desperate determination of stating his proposals to Captain Belmore, and for that purpose solicited an early interview. When this fact was announced to Clara, she became greatly alarmed, because she both loved and feared her father, and she could neither endure the idea of disobeying him, nor determine upon committing her happiness to the keeping of a partner so every way repugnant as her *soi-distant* admirer.

When summoned, therefore, into her parent's presence, she felt like a criminal about to receive condemnation; and deeply did she condemn the meanness, as she termed it, of the spirit that could, in defiance of her unconcealed aversion, persist in pretending to her acceptance, and thus call in the aid of parental authority, where his merits had failed to secure him a preference; for Clara, be it known, no longer reasoned like a child; she had latterly been amazingly enlightened by the teachings of her naval admirer, who, to youth and many personal graces, added a superabundance of romance sufficient to have turned the head of a wiser and more staid person than Clara Belmore.

To George Wilder, the name of Captain Delorme had long been as distasteful as it was to Clara herself, and now that they had met face to face, aspirants to the same prize, the delinquencies of the latter found in him a ready and unsparing critic.

To these animadversions, Clara listened with a favouring ear, drawing secret comparisons between the two, in which the captain was every way a sufferer. When, however, she found herself in the presence of her father, and listened to his calm and dispassionate expositions of Delorme's views, to the causes why he deemed such worthy of her acceptance, and to his affectionate admonitions to discard from her mind all prejudice while she gave his proposals an attentive consideration, she could not but own that many of her own arguments fell entirely to the ground, while others were so weak and untenable, that she was ashamed to advance them as arguments in support of her refusal.

Her repugnance, however, was too strong to be concealed, and tears streamed in torrents over her pale cheeks. Her father neither expostulated nor entreated,—he contented himself with proving the mere facts of the case—dwelt on his own waning health—his want of fortune to endow his children—the friendless position of his family so far from home, in the contingency of his life being cut off,—and concluded by giving her three days to reflect and deliberate, intimating that he had taken means to prevent her judgment being influenced by any untimely persecution, having forbidden the captain's visit until the expiration of the indicated period.

Nor was Delorme the only visitor so excluded; for wisely considering that the weapon of ridicule is one of the most dangerous that can be applied to a hesitating mind, Captain Belmore had judged it expedient to place his young friend George Wilder under an equal restraint, and, on the morning appointed for the momentous decision, was perhaps not sorry to receive a P. P. C. visit, his vessel being under sailing orders, and affording no time for any confidential communications. To George and Clara this event was deeply distressing, but winds and waves wait not for lovers' vows, consequently theirs were brief indeed.

The intervening period had been passed by Clara chiefly in listening to her mother's thrice-told eulogium on the merits of the suitor whom she favoured, and, exhausted by the contention, and perhaps by the parting from George, to whom she believed herself irrevocably attached, she threw herself at her father's feet, imploring him, in the most pathetic terms, not to condemn her to become the wife of a man who, whatever might be his good qualities, she found it impossible to receive with the smallest regard.

To this appeal the father's heart was not insensible, and though disappointed and distressed, he raised his daughter in his arms, and pledged his word that so long as life and health were granted him, she should never be persecuted by any suit which could by possibility be fatal to her repose.

After this event, Captain Delorme was made to understand that any attentions beyond those of friendship would be deemed offensive, and that only upon his promise to respect Miss Belmore's decision could his future visits be permitted.

Conscious that his most dangerous rival was now removed, and resting on the secret influence which he maintained in the good graces of Mrs. Belmore, Delorme was glad to accept the *entrée* on any terms,

and readily availed himself of the privileges thus accorded, while Clara, relieved from his persecutions, and of all apprehensions respecting him, received him with complacency, apparently willing to show her desire to repair to the mere acquaintance those uncourteous slights which she had thought fit to bestow upon the unwelcome lover.

But now a question arose, that absorbed all other feelings in the one interest that pervaded the garrison. An awful rumour was in mysterious circulation. Men clustered together in corners, and conversed in grave whispers, suddenly breaking off their discourse when joined by a new-comer, or affecting obstreperous mirth, to hide the apprehension that was daily growing more apparent.

Families were abruptly departing from the Rock, some to England, and—though it was by no means safe on account of the war—some into Spain—or, failing vessels home, even to the Mediterranean.

The doctors were observed to be stealthily alert, and affectedly idle. Looks were responded to by looks, and each seemed fearful of fashioning his thoughts into speech. Daily the parades grew less formal, and all duties, not absolutely necessary to the good order of the garrison, were fast falling into disuse. The officers were no longer seen promenading in merry groups. Parties were abolished—the soldiers were kept close to their barracks—mirth had fled—business was suspended—the shops were closed—the merchant's stores shut up—the streets become silent as the grave—and desolation was fast spreading itself over the place of doom.

Then came the appointment of lazarettos to receive the sick—the drafting of regiments for volunteers, to the most dangerous duties—those were selected from among the soldiers who had served in the West Indies, or on the Rock during a season of epidemic fever. Then houses were placed under the *surveillance* of sentries; next, whole streets were barricadoed; and finally concealment was at an end; the port was closed, the yellow flag was hoisted, the dock became a place of quarantine, and the presence of *the plague* was speedily declared.

Who can speak the horror of that single sentence? Not even those who have partaken the sufferings of a place so visited!—how little then can others comprehend all the fearful contingencies attendant upon that horrible annunciation?

Henceforth the vessels arriving from other ports, warned by the fatal signal, steered wide of the harbour, communicating only distantly with the depôt ships of war lying off the New Mole, under the command of Rear-Admiral Fleming, and then passed away in terror of every breeze that swept across their decks.

Letters to England were forbidden, the Rock paper was circulated jealously, and its details could no longer be relied on—the progress of the war had lost its engrossing interest, and upon the single point where all minds concentrated the reports were every way delusive—hopes were held forth that had no foundation—not half the number of cases recorded, and no death that could by possibility be kept concealed. Such was the danger to be apprehended from spreading the alarm, which in spite of all precautions acted only too powerfully as a most insidious assistant to the incursions of the disease.

And soon instead of being a journal of incidental occurrences, the Rock paper became only a vehicle for the transmission of garrison regulations.

Female attendants were no longer to be had in any capacity; washerwomen and nurses abandoned their duties, and could neither be bribed nor threatened into their performance. Delicate hands were dedicated to the most servile and laborious occupations, and each family became a separate community, holding no intercourse with the rest, except such as were passed through the momentary interchange of a few words conveyed by the conductors of the provision-carts, by whom stores were daily deposited in baskets placed at spots appointed for the purpose.

The only circumstances that interrupted the solemn stillness of the place were the transits of such carts, or of others devoted to more mournful duties. The course of that appointed for the conveyance of the sick to the public lazarettos was often marked by the wailings of the dying, or the shrieks of the newly-smitten, who were forcibly torn from their distracted relatives, in all probability to die among hospital hirelings, and to be hurled, without distinction of rank or sex, into those dreadfully capacious pits dug on the neutral ground—to serve as the common receptacle of all persons suspected to have died of the pestilence, in each of which at the least fifty uncoffined bodies were huddled and heaped together.

The separation of infected members from their families was a measure considered essential to stop the course of infection, but it could only be practised where one person in a household suffered: in these cases, however, it was so abhorrent to the feelings of the people generally, that the doctors were continually assailed by the most heart-piercing entreaties to secrete the fact of such cases,—and failing in their prayers, many persons have been known wilfully to incur the infection, so that, by a family quarantine, they might be suffered to remain shut up together in their homes, to the chances of recovery or death.

When the spread of the infection rendered the calamity more general, the removal to lazarettos, except in very peculiar circumstances, became of necessity abandoned. And during this period there was scarcely a family on the Rock, from whose history could not be selected, among the women especially, instances of courage, of beautiful attachment—of enduring constancy, of self-abnegation and intrepidity, that would have adorned the annals of past ages.

Perhaps, of all the circumstances attendant on that awful visitation, none was more terrible than the frightful rapidity with which burial followed death. The necessity of the measure could not be disputed—but the occasional results were truly horrible to reflect upon.

The passages of the death-carts were unintermitting day and night; the solemn rumble might continually be distinguished; and though the conductors did not, as in some places in times of plague, summon the survivors to bring out their dead, the celerity with which they appeared in the chambers of the scarcely breathless,—unceremoniously hustling the beloved departed into a coffin that was destined to bear numbers only to the brink of the grave, from which, except by special

favour, it was there to be cast into its nauseous resting-place, were details sufficiently revolting to the feelings of the survivors.

Nor was this unhallowed burial, where no prayers consecrated the repose of the departed, the only circumstance that harrowed the sorrows of the mourners. There was yet a fearful question, which had, in several cases, been but too awfully answered, that paralyzed them with terror then, and formed the subject of painful doubt to many for the remainder of their lives—

Was the buried—DEAD?

The terror of a living burial appears to be indigenous to the human mind—how many record their fears on the face of their last testament! To how many injunctions does that single apprehension give rise! Even death itself loses its hideousness in comparison with the horrible suggestion of recovering sensation and memory in the grave! and *what* a grave was theirs? Who could venture to portray such an awakening? The human mind would break down, and reason itself be frightened from her throne, were we steadily to contemplate the position of a victim restored to consciousness in the midst of such a charnel-pit of vileness and corruption.

WAS THE BURIED *dead?*

Thou wert wise! thou wert good! thou wert loved!

With thy name all my hopes were entwined,
And each day but more tenderly proved

How *my* life in *thy* life was enshrined!
But the light has gone out from thine eye,
And thine odorous breathings are shed,
And while to awake thee I try,
They rudely exclaim, thou art dead!

Thou wert prized as the one precious gem,
And my heart was the casket for thee!
Yet now I am plundered by them,
And they bear my rich treasure from me;
They wait not for coffin nor shroud,
They heed not the tears that I shed,
But they hustle thee off with the crowd,
And can it be *true* thou art dead?

Thou wert good! yet no requiem nor bell
Denotes the sad passage of worth,
And no shuddering mourner may tell
How they flung thee like filth in the earth?
Death with horrors hath heaped thee around,
Corruption now pillows thy head,
They have piled up that dread cavern's bound,
And now must I *pray* thou art dead!

Couldst thou wake in that pestilent grave
To know where thou'rt left to decay,
To struggle, to battle, to rave,
'Mongst the dead as thou gropest thy way,
Thou wouldst tear out thine heart in affright;
Thy wisdom, thine intellect fled,
Couldst thou creep through that death-slime to light,
Affection would wish thou wert dead!

Thy death, that but now was the theme
 Of mine anguish, my tears, my despair,
 To such horrors as these doth but seem
 A subject for tenderest prayer.
 Thou art gone!—thou art risen on high—
 To the throne of thy Father thou'rt sped!
 Thou'rt above!—wherefore, then, should I sigh?—
 Would to God I were *sure* thou wert dead!

That the danger was not merely imaginary was demonstrated by several startling cases, where trance was mistaken for death; and as those persons were but rarely rescued, and the sable attendants were permitted to exercise a discretionary power, there is only too much lamentable cause to fear that in some instances the awakening may have come too late.

One instance of escape was afforded by an officer, who was subsequently one of the greatest ornaments of our dramatic corps—Lieutenant Jordan, of the 26th—who suffered from the epidemic fever in its worst form, and who being by his medical adviser reported 'dying,' was accordingly placed on the list for burial, and the watching of a faithful servant was immediately interrupted by the entrance of the dead-bearers, who insisted upon carrying off what they termed the corpse.

In vain the domestic protested that his master was only in "a faint." The doctors had pronounced his condition to be hopeless,—his case was one of those that "always terminate on the ninth day;" the ninth day had arrived, the lieutenant offered no resistance, and therefore dead they insisted he must be, and buried he should be they were determined.

But determination, though a good thing in itself, is not half so powerful as when backed by attachment. Consequently, after a fruitless war of words, the servant adopted a more *striking* method of argument, and, in despite of a few knock-down hits, had nearly succeeded in ejecting his antagonists, when his fidelity was rewarded by the awakening of his master, whom, to his great joy, he suddenly perceived a silent but deeply-interested spectator of the affray.

A loud "Hurrah for the master, and long life to him!" closed the contention, and completed the expulsion of the intruders. And the invalid's life *was* spared to rejoice the poor fellow with many proofs of his gratitude, and to become one of the most joyous and popular persons in the coteries of the garrison, among whom he used to relate the particulars of his escape with that inimitable unction which so pre-eminently characterized his amusing narratives.

For a similar rescue Delorme was likewise indebted to the pertinacity of his servant, who, upon a like visit, locked his master's chamber-door, and resolutely refused to find the key. It afterwards proved that the mission of the bearers was to the adjoining quarters. As, however, the captain was at the time suffering from collapse, and too feeble either to speak or move, he would undoubtedly have been carried off by the half-drunken and wholly callous persons whose pressing duties rendered them far from particular in their examinations.

Another and still more awful case was that of the wife of a medical officer, who since that period is reported to have amassed a consider-

able fortune by means of the very remarkable reputation that he has established for himself.

She was the mother of a large family, nearly all of whom participated in the one calamity; she was guarded with the most solicitous care by the skill of her husband and the affection of her eldest daughter, a girl of unshrinking courage and superior intellect, yet, despite all their most strenuous exertions, she sank under the disease, and her sorrowing husband pronounced her—*dead!*

By extraordinary influence the lapse of three hours was granted between death and burial—and the decencies of the grave permitted; the last duties were piously performed for her by sorrowing relations—she was carefully placed within her coffin, and the mourners were gazing their last, before the final closing of the scene—when the pale form, bursting the ghastly cerements of the tomb, reared itself from its dark sleep, and, with fully awakened consciousness, saw and comprehended all. *One* look of horror rested momentarily on the group that surrounded her,—*one* fearful shriek rang hollowly through the chamber,—and then the living tenant sank down a fitting occupant of the receptacle that enclosed her.

In vain the fondest caresses were breathed upon the pallid lips—in vain was the chill form hurried to a warm couch, and surrounded by all the comforts that inventive love could suggest—that single moment of affright had for ever chased the returning spirit, and the yawning grave closed over the victim of expediency.

A catastrophe not less affecting, but from a different cause, than the foregoing, was furnished by the fate of a tenderly-attached young couple, who, after an engagement protracted by the scruples of friends and other occurrences, had been only a few months married. The husband was a junior officer on the medical staff, and was known to have set up for himself an antidotal theory, by the rigid observance of which he pretended that all persons might, if they would, escape the infection.

This consisted partly in a course of regimen, but mainly in taking large doses of calomel—a medicine during the attack in such common use, that the doctors were in the habit of carrying their waistcoat pockets filled with pills compounded of it, which they plentifully administered upon the first symptoms of the complaint.

Very early during the season of visitation, Doctor Waters was missed from his appointed rounds, but all communication between districts was so difficult and uncertain, that whether he had received orders of removal, or had falsified his own practice by falling a victim to the disease, could only be conjectured, and few found leisure to inquire beyond the welfare of their own hearth.

The residence of the doctor stood apart, and was surrounded by a walled court, which remained jealously closed; his fate, therefore, was not known until the peregrinations of the fumigatory agents after the departure of the plague revealed, among many other horrible secrets, those which rested in the concealment of his dwelling.

Here the remains of husband and wife were found resting ghastly together: some scattered memoranda, showing that they had both strictly adhered to the doctor's prescriptive system, but that, so far

from its acting as a preventive, it had only served to weaken the animal powers, and when they imbibed the infection, rendered the use of those medicines which might have been effective, altogether useless to their debilitated habit.

They had died without seeking help from others, and passed away happily, it is to be hoped, inasmuch as that they were not divided.

Their servant, in whom they appeared to have placed unlimited confidence, was found in the court, also dead; and concealed about his person were all the portable valuables and cash which had belonged to the unfortunate pair: whether he had purloined them for his own use, and was in the act of escaping, when death summoned him to render an account of his stewardship, or that he had thus secreted them in obedience to the wishes of his dying master, who might possibly have delegated to him the task of transmitting the property to his distant friends, was a mystery that will only be known when master and man shall appear before the tribunal of Immortal Justice.

I might, however, swell these very imperfect sketches to a volume, and yet leave unmentioned hundreds of the most touching ravages of the monster fiend who depopulated alike the mansion and the hut; I must, therefore, call back my thoughts at once to the narrative of my legitimate heroine.

(To be continued.)

SONG.

“Och! plösse Lethe's strow wie sonss.”—LONGE.

O LETHE! flowed thy current still, how gladly would my lip,
To drown the memory of the past, thy blessed waters sip;
But ah! no longer flows her stream, and memory has the sway,
And thoughts of all the past arise, and cloud our sunniest day!

The holy light of heavenly hope finds entrance to the breast,
And, pointing to futurity, smiles all our fears to rest;
But e'en the blessed smile of hope in clouds is sometimes cast,
It cannot pierce the blackening veil—the memory of the past!

It rises in the midnight hour, it veils the light of day;
It clothes the youthful brow with age, it makes the heart its prey;
'Tis the worm that never dieth, living—gnawing to the last
Oh! the curse on Adam's children is the memory of the past!

N. J. LUCAS.

HIGH TREASON.

It was the noon of a hot summer's day, and the tide of life was running high and hurriedly through the narrow streets of London, darkened by the overhanging houses that disfigured it in the time of the first James; the bold 'prentices of the good city, in default of the more active amusement of bludgeons and buffets, were lightening the toil of enforced attention to business by jests on the passers-by, and occasionally sharp bandyings of the same among themselves, whereby were laid the foundations of many evening games, productive of black eyes and broken bones. At the same time those who paced the doorways or dark shops of "the Chepe" were tolerably unanimous in one point, thanks to the appearance of two individuals who were unfortunate enough to draw upon themselves the exercise of the mischievous vivacity for which they were rather remarkable. There certainly was something noticeable and particular in one of these persons—just what might be supposed likely to excite the ridicule of youths accustomed to consider ease of manner, or its more current representative impudence, as absolutely essential to the formation of a manly character. He was taller and larger than his companion, on whose arm he leaned, or rather dragged heavily, or which he occasionally jerked by a stumble against some passer-by; he was evidently a dweller in wilds remote, a perfect stranger in the metropolis, whose wonders and bustle seemed absolutely to have bewildered him, and his unsophisticated stare was only interrupted by the bashful withdrawal of his eyes when it was returned. Yet, puzzled and stupid as the countenance now looked, the open brow and well-formed mouth seemed competent to express better things, and his limbs, spite of the unaccustomed air with which he wore a new and fashionable suit of clothes, were well formed. The fault of bashfulness, or the virtue of modesty, could not certainly be attributed to his companion; his walk was a stiff conceited strut, and his countenance was adorned with an air of assurance that was its only though doubtful recommendation; his dress was rather shabby, and worn with a carelessness that seemed to aspire to the pretensions of the aristocrat, and the privileges of the reveller. He was evidently much annoyed by the species of attention they excited, for which he entirely blamed his companion, and hurried him along with an oath and an exhortation to look before him, that increased the perturbation under which he laboured. "It is an ill wind that blows no one good;" so thought a portly-looking personage, who, with his hands crossed at his back, was standing at the door of a tavern they were approaching, and whose smile of sympathy with the merry humour of the 'prentices was checked into one of complaisance as its object drew near.

"A fair day, gentles," he said, "but methinks rather warm for

walking—step in, and try if a rump steak and a tankard of ale will not suit the time better.”

“Um,” said the smaller of the two to whom this was addressed, looking up and down the street; “no man of fashion in sight. I believe, friend, I must peril my reputation for the advantages you promise, provided you engage never to name the fact.”

“O no, sir,” returned the landlord, with a half grin: “I won’t tell my lord chief-justice, though he should send to ask me. Pray step in.”

And he escorted them into a large room, where a number of grave, respectable-looking citizens were engaged in discussing a solid and steaming meal, who were indeed too earnestly occupied to have noticed the new-comers, if the one, hitherto the speaker, had not started back with a loud oath, and asked the landlord how he could think of introducing a gentleman into such company. Two or three mutterings, and a general smile of contempt, hailed the remark from the dinner-table, and the countryman in a confused whisper urged his companion to sit down quietly—they should do very well; but this would not suit the other; it was an opportunity to show his consequence that could not be neglected; he peremptorily insisted on a private room, to which the landlord, promising that they must pay handsomely for it, agreed to conduct them. He, however, modified the promise as he went, by the observation that two gentlemen were already taking their wine there.

“But you can be as snug and solitary as on Hampstead Heath,” he went on; “for they are too busy talking, either to see or hear you, I’ll engage.”

The spokesman entered the room very much with the air of one who thought it impossible *he* should be disregarded in any case. It was an up-stairs back room, low and long, and garnished with two small casemented windows, consisting of dull small panes of glass, which overlooked a narrow yard backed by a high wall. At the farther end of this apartment, at a table on which stood two nearly empty bottles, as many drinking cups, and some hard cakes, sat two men, whom a tailor would have designated low fellows, and a philosopher regarded with curiosity, if not with interest—that is, they were shabbily dressed men of nature’s nobility; some sheets of paper and pens and ink lay between them; they were not now, as the host had supposed, engaged in conversation; they sat, each with his head leaning on his hand, and silent, but so deep in thought, that neither lifted his eyes on the entrance of the new guests, who placed themselves at a table at the other end of the room, the countryman emitting a sigh of relief as he leaned back on his seat, and his companion, in a tone of importance, ordering a chicken and canary wine, which order, with an appropriate bow, the host withdrew to execute.

“Well, Barnes,” continued the town-bred gallant, cocking his hat over his left eyebrow, “what think you of our poor town? Is it equal to Belton? Come, let us hear what you think of it.”

“Why, truly, cousin Bradlaw,” replied the countryman, in a clear voice, but provincial accent, “I yet hardly know; if I could see it when there was not such a confounded bustle and confusion in the streets, I should know more about it. One ought to be here in harvest

time, when the men, women, and children have something else to do than run gadding through the streets."

His companion laughed. "Their harvest is every day in the year, and is frequently gathered in the streets," he said.

The countryman shook his head as inclined to think he was hoaxed, but did not pursue the subject. "It is time my cause was pushed, cousin," he remarked; "I shall be wanted at home in a few days—there's the sheep-shearing and the wake. I should like to get the business finished to-day."

"Matters at court are not so easily finished," replied Bradlaw, "but we'll see about it. By-the-bye, you must give me some more money; the exorbitant rascal I saw yesterday took all you gave me the day before, and there are two or three more to be won yet—you must not spare if you would get on at court."

"It's dear work," said Barnes, sighing. "I don't know what Jane will say to it; there's a hundred marks gone already, and nothing to see for it; I don't know whether the farm will pay for it, though it is good land, and lies so convenient."

"Well, we'll talk of it after dinner," interrupted Bradlaw, "for here comes mine host with the chicken."

For several minutes both were fully employed in satisfying the demands of hunger and thirst, and too earnestly devoted to the task to mingle conversation with it. In the mean time, the other party broke the long and thoughtful silence in which they had hitherto been immersed. At first they spoke in a low tone and short sentences, but gradually their voices rose, and their manner became more energetic, till a few words uttered by one of them startled those at the other table, and aroused their anxious attention. The words were rather extraordinary, and naturally startling to a peaceable and loyal subject: they were these:—

"The king must be killed—that you agree."

"O, certainly," replied his companion, "there cannot be two opinions on that subject."

The countryman stared with horror and astonishment, and his cousin, with a tragical and important look, signed to him to keep silence. The conversation at the other table continued—

"You see," went on the last speaker, "he has done all the mischief it is necessary he should do, so we may consign him to the Styx."

"Yes, yes," answered the other hastily; "but the question is, how and where? For my part, I think poison would do best, it gives such an opportunity for the expression of pain, repentance, and patriotic speeches."

The other shook his head.

"I don't know," he said; "the dagger is more heroic; and then, you know, he need not die directly, and you have all the opportunity you want for those."

"I should like to strike out some new plan," observed his friend; "fire—water—gunpowder," he enumerated thoughtfully;—"just let your mind run over every possible mode of death; I should like to and one unhackneyed, if I could"—and both were again silent a few

minutes, an interval which was filled up at the other table with a pantomimic display of horror and curiosity.

"He might be thankful, you know," resumed one of the conspirators, "that his son was spared—that might have a good effect. Suppose the deed were done when he was holding a council?"

"But then," returned the other, "comes back the question of the mode of death—I prefer poison."

"Good God, how horrible!" groaned the countryman in a subdued tone.

His companion motioned him to silence, as one of the other party looked round at the sound of his voice, but carelessly resumed the subject, as if nothing fearing.

"Well, let us decide quickly, for it must be done to-day," said the advocate of poison. "Here, you take pen and paper, and write your notions on the subject; I will do the same, and then we can compare them—but first a cup of wine, for plotting is dry work."

The other assented, each swallowed a tolerable draught, poured from the bottle beside him, and, taking up their pens, wrote slowly and thoughtfully.

The countryman's eyes were fixed upon his companion with questioning wonder as to how they should act in these dreadful circumstances. Bradlaw compressed his lips, and looked significantly important; at last, beckoning his friend to approach his ear to his mouth, he whispered, as lightly as he could,

"Be sure don't let them escape while I am away," and, nodding mysteriously, he crept quietly towards the door, which he opened as gently as possible, and, pulling it to after him, descended the stairs two or three at a time.

Meantime, Barnes was gradually recovering his faculties, and placed, as he imagined, in a dangerous position, his courage and determination rose to meet it.

"They are horrid wicked chaps, that's certain," he said to himself; "but somehow I don't like taking 'em, as it were, in a net—killing a fox in his hole; at least I'll warn 'em what we're going to do, and they can stand at bay—bad as they are, it's not English not to give 'em fair play."

The conspirators were still occupied with their pens, whose intermittent scratching was the only sound heard in the apartment. Barnes had taken his determination;—he rose, and walking steadily up to the table where they sat, hemmed loudly to attract their attention, but it was too entirely fixed upon their employment.

"Gentlemen," he said, finding this vain;—one of them—the one who had expressed his preference of poison—looked up.

"Well, my friend, what do you want?" he said, with an impatient gesture; "you interrupt an important consultation."

"Gentlemen," repeated the countryman, "I and my friend have heard all you have been saying the last half hour. I thought it but fair to let you know, that you might be prepared."

"Why," said the proposer of the more heroic death, with a smile, "you are not going to compound a rival plot, are you?"

"Nay, if he is, we must take care of ourselves," added the other

gaily, "and kill in some new way, if we shoe a troop of horse with felt, as Willy says."

"God forbid!" replied the countryman, surprised at the lightness with which they treated a discovery so dangerous to their safety—"God forbid that I should have hand or heel in such plots. I'd scorn to attack a man, if he was only a man, without giving him a chance of defending himself—but a king!—don't you know that, whatever chance you give him, if you kill a king, even if you escape hanging, you'll certainly be damned."

"I don't know," observed one of his hearers, with a slight smile; "if it was not done so often without danger of either, our trouble now might have been less—but, my friend, it is no business of yours."

"Yes, it is," replied the countryman energetically, "and so you shall find it, I warn you cousin—and I will spoil your plots for you!"

"You will?" ejaculated the advocate of poison, leaning back in his chair, and regarding this strange intruder with a stare of astonishment that gradually gave way to a laugh that to the horrified Barnes sounded satanic, and which, accompanied by a glance at his friend, was answered by his equally obstreperous merriment. They were both almost exhausted with their laughter, and were wiping away its accompanying tears, while Barnes looked on with a fear that they were suddenly gone mad, when Bradlaw returned, accompanied by the whole tavern establishment, and several of the remaining guests of the ordinary, who were anxious to prove their loyalty, and to see the dreadful conspirators;—last came the landlord, panting and groaning.

"O Lord," he cried, "that my house—an honest tavern for twenty years—should come to this at last—to be the nest to hatch treason in—take care of the windows. O dear, O dear! the sacrilegious rascals! and it's the King's Arms too!"

Meantime, taking care to be well supported by his companions, Bradlaw approached the table of the still merry conspirators, crying authoritatively, "Yield, gentlemen, in the king's name. I arrest you for high treason."

"Nonsense," said one of the accused with a smile, struggling with a sense of annoyance; "don't be a fool, my friend; we were but contriving the plot of a tragedy. My name is Fletcher; some of you know me, I dare say," he added, looking round upon the posse of loyal zealots. His supposition was, for himself, unfortunately right. "Ha, Ben," he continued, as he met a merry eye amongst them, "you can tell them we are honest men, and faithful subjects of the king."

"Sorry I can't say that much, Master Fletcher," replied Ben, looking as grave as he could; "Willy says you are rather addicted to stealing, and I know you to have had a hand in many plots and conspiracies."

Fletcher tossed his head with a smile and a frown.

"Come, Ben," he said, "it's no time for a joke; tell these asses what a blunder they're making."

"Master Fletcher," replied Ben, conscientiously placing his hand

on his breast, "it goes against my conscience to give any other evidence than that I have already given to this honourable company—I hope you may get your deserts."

"Come, come," resumed Bradlaw, "the case is plain enough, and his majesty's sacred self shall hear of it—and here is additional evidence," he continued, as he pounced upon the papers on which the confederates had been writing.

"Read them, read them," was the general cry.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," said the invoked with elaborate dignity, while Fletcher, spite of his disagreeable position, regarded him with a comic smile—"I am somewhat too well born to enact the secretary to such a company"—*par parenthèse*, he could not read writing;—"mine host," he went on, "is the proper person to read them;—as master of the house, he is the chief person in this business."

"God forbid!" cried the landlord, retreating from the front ranks, whither his curiosity had led him—"I never could be taught to read, and, besides, who knows but it may be a spell to raise the devil?"

The holder of the manuscript treason looked at it doubtfully, and held it more slightly. "Here, Barnes," he said, holding it towards his country friend, "you read it."

"Faith I would not care if it was a spell to raise all the devils with," was the reply, "but I never could read written hand. But we want no more evidence; I'll swear, before any justice in the land, I heard them contriving to kill the king, and that would be treason at Belton, whatever it may be here."

"I'll read it, master," said the man called Ben, stepping forward with earnest gravity. "I've a piece of witch-elm in my pocket to guard his satanic majesty's own treasury—an empty purse—give it me, and I'll read it. Hem!" he commenced, loudly clearing his throat as he received it.—"To all whom it may concern—that is not here, gentlemen, but it's a good beginning for a legal instrument—to all whom it may concern," he resumed, "this is to give notice—'The prince, irritated at his father's harshness and severity, and urged by ambition, forms a plot against the life of the king—the father and son are quarrelling when the conspirators enter—the prince pronounces the words that were to be the signal—they commence the attack—the king, believing the life of his son equally their object, throws himself before him, and receives his death-wound—his daughter enters horrified, &c., but the father's last words signify that he perceives his son's guilt—the prince, in the agonies of shame and remorse, defies to combat the conspirator, and the princess'—That's all," said Ben, abruptly looking round on his open-mouthed auditory; "but could anything be worse? Here's the king and prince expected to quarrel—flat blasphemy!—here's a gentleman proposing to fight in a lady's presence—deliberate heresy!—and the king, his most sacred and peaceable majesty, God bless him! hacking away like a common soldier—downright sedition! How say you, gentlemen—guilty or not guilty?"

Fletcher had been watching, with an amused smile, the annoyed expression of his friend's face, as his crude plans were thus read and commented on, and the smile increased to a laugh as his companion

started up, and, in tones that almost overpowered the unanimous shout that followed the appeal, cried, with an oath,

"You consummate fools, can't you see you are hoaxed?—can't you distinguish between the plot of a tragedy and high treason?"

"Friend," retorted Bradlaw, conceitedly, "it would better become you to treat loyal men with more respect; we are rather sharper than you take us for. Barnes, seize and pinion him—and you," he added, addressing Fletcher, "come quietly with us, and it may be best for you. Seize him, friends," he continued, darting back among his companions as Fletcher rose from his seat; but he soon found it was with no violent intentions, and the general retreat was followed by a general rush, as his peaceable design became apparent.

"Well, gentlemen," said the accused conspirator, trying to look grave, "if it must be so, it must—where do you intend to take us?"

"Even into the king's own most sacred presence," said Bradlaw importantly.

"Have a care, my masters," said the host, shaking his head doubtfully—"I don't think his majesty would thank you for taking such desperate-minded villains into his presence—he has a peaceable and godly horror of men of violence; better take them to the duke—he is quick-witted, and zealous for his majesty's safety, as is becoming in a nobleman and faithful servant—take them to the duke."

This opinion was acted upon, and Fletcher, by a whisper, having induced his friend to submit, the two conspirators were secured as well as conveniences would permit, and, attended by several of the company who were anxious to see the issue, and escorted by the two cousins, they were carried to the water-side, intending to take boat there for Greenwich, where the king and court then were.

Let us follow the course of the story to a shaded hollow in Greenwich Park, where was assembled a large and motley-looking party. It was one of the whims of Buckingham, who generally led the amusements of the court, to perform, with a company made up of some of the noblemen and gentlemen composing it, a play which he had himself written for the purpose. This morning had been appointed for a rehearsal, and the place just named fixed on as the scene. Buckingham was enacting, to the life, the careless lover to the princess of the piece, and, in answer to one of the lady's most elaborate and expository speeches, was observing that—

"Nor sun, nor moon, nor stars are always shining,
And Love, not less celestial, changes too."

He had "crossed over," as the stage directions recommended, after this, when, from the path towards which he had advanced, a keeper suddenly emerged, who, taking off his hat, stood in an attitude that requested his attention.

"Well," exclaimed the theatrical hero, with an oath, "thy wonder come discuss—the clouds in thy countenance must needs fall by pailfuls."

"My lord," said the keeper, with a grave importance, who had been retained counsel by the proper fee, "here is a body of grave and respectable citizens, who have brought two men whom they accuse

of high treason, and they petition to submit the matter to your grace, whose talents and penetration they are aware of."

"Get thee gone for a saucy flatterer," said Buckingham. "But stay ;—bring them all hither, traitors and accusers together, it will make an excellent interlude. Go and bring them quick—and hark ye, tell them the king himself will hear them."

The keeper bowed, and disappeared.

"A hall ! a hall !" said the duke, as he turned toward the company.

The princess of the scene started—she did not remember those words in the play—and the rest of the assemblage looked expectant of some new whim.

"My lords and ladies," continued Buckingham gravely, "my last speech was prophetic—I am changed. I was a lover—I am now a judge—a total and startling change. A hall ! a hall ! for the trial of one accused of high treason !"

The surprise of his hearers was increased, and one or two did not look quite at their ease. The duke led the heroine of the play politely to her seat, and then arranging his dress to as grave an appearance as it was capable of, he issued a command to that effect to the rest, and in a few minutes was formed a mimic court of justice.

"And now," said Buckingham, as he seated himself on a high bank which was intended to represent the woolsack, "Heaven send that his most gracious Majesty's paternal lecture may outlast this grave and important trial. Heaven forbid that high treason, though but in the egg, should approach his presence."

"Here is a court, truly, my lord," observed a lady of the party, "but where is the criminal?"

"Madam," said Buckingham, glancing his eyes maliciously towards his less-pleased hearers, "they are not far off. O, here they are," he continued as the keeper approached escorting plaintiffs and defendants. "There should be a flourish of trumpets," he went on ; "but a cackle saved Rome, and we may be satisfied with a goose as herald. Which are the accusers, and which the accused?" he observed, changing his high tone and manner to one more consistent with his character as judge.

Bradlaw advanced before the rest, and bending his knee before the supposed king, in no wise abashed by his presence, proceeded, in terms of inflated loyalty, to declare the horror with which he brought before his majesty such desperate villains, whose well-authenticated guilt he proceeded to rehearse. He was surprised, he concluded, to see the monarch so awfully threatened absolutely struggling with a convulsive attempt not to laugh, and on looking round to his prisoners to perceive that they were indulging an equally merry mood, he looked round to his chief supporter Ben, but his eye had caught the infection—he looked again at the supposed king, who by a violent effort had by this time recovered his gravity.

"Let us see the paper you have named, as containing the outline of the plot," said the judge.

Bradlaw advanced to present it ; the monarch held it before his face to read, but the movement of his shoulders expressed some strong convulsion that looked decidedly like mirth. As soon as he had finished

reading the papers, he raised his head with an exaggerated frown that was intended to mask a more merry expression.

"Let the prisoners be brought near," he said. "How now, you rascals?" he continued, addressing Fletcher, "have you nothing better to do than to form such villainous plots?"

"Please your grace," said Fletcher, with a demure smile, "a rival plotter is no fair judge. I contend that 'the plot is a good plot—an excellent plot,'—meaning mine of course."

"What, to kill the king in a vulgar brawl, or despatch him with poison, like a rat in a hole? Are these the best plots you could form? Why, I think I could have contrived a better myself."

"With submission to your grace's judgment," said Fletcher, curbing a smile, "you will relish the last plan more when it is performed, as I design it in a few days."

The coolness with which the accused met the charge, and the manner in which the monarch had received intimation of it, had actually stunned Bradlaw into a silence from which this last daring threat, as he conceived it, aroused without enlightening him, and, anxious to show his zeal, he called upon Barnes to assist him in removing the bold and dangerous traitor from the presence of his Majesty. Barnes had seemed utterly confounded, both sense and senses, by the impressive presence in which he found himself, his cheek burning as if the bright eyes around him had been so many sunglasses, all directed upon it. He caught nothing of the meaning of the scene, or its ridicule; nothing was present to his ear but a general buz, nothing to his sight but eyes whose number outstarred the firmament, all looking at him. At length it occurred to him, as a last and desperate resource, that he would steal away the very first opportunity, and with this determination he took heart, and looked carefully round, but with a glance that had a strong tendency to earth. He thus became sensible of the laugh that pervaded the assembly, which, of course, he took to be levelled against himself, and which strengthened his resolve to escape. It was at this moment that the sound of his name, as uttered by his cousin, struck on his ear; the impetus was quite contrary to the intention. Barnes only thereby perceived that there was a chance of his being brought into a more conspicuous position, and he straightway turned about to flee. Buckingham perceived his design, and, curious to know its motive, called to a gentleman who had just joined the party, "Stop him, Vivani, stop him!" The gentleman obeyed by stretching out his arms to impede his further progress, and then grasping his shoulder, the countryman's spirit rose with the perception of physical opposition, and his ear had caught the name by which his retainer was addressed—it was that of the very man to whom his cousin had, as he had informed him, given the hundred marks the day before. A moment he struggled silently; at length, finding that his strength was no match for his opponent's supple but clinging hold, he cried in desperation, "For God's sake, let me go, if not for the money I sent you yesterday, at least for the hundred marks I'll give you to-morrow." But the person he addressed, supposing him mad, only tightened his hold.

"Bring him here, Vivani," cried Buckingham.

"You ungrateful scoundrel!" exclaimed Barnes, passionately but vainly struggling with Vivani's attempt to obey. "Is this all a hundred marks will buy at court?" and by the time he had, by the help of some assiduous standers-by been dragged before Buckingham, indignation had utterly overcome bashfulness, and he met the duke's look of smiling surprise with a flashing eye and a bold brow.

"Why, man, did you attempt to escape?" questioned Buckingham.

"Why does this fellow hold me? The ungrateful rascal!" cried the exasperated countryman. "I sent him a hundred marks yesterday, and now I only asked him to let me go."

"For what did you send him so large a sum?" asked the duke, glancing suspiciously from one to the other.

"The man is mad," said Vivani. "I know nothing of him, his money, or his concerns."

Barnes's surprise for the moment mastered his indignation, and he was silent.

"For what, I ask, did you send him so large a sum?" repeated the duke, to whom the countryman's manner was proof of his sincerity.

"Why, your majesty," he said at length, "I always heard, saving your majesty's presence, that there was little truth to be found at court—and that's true, any how. I wanted to get a lease of the Heathside farm; the Duke of Buckingham is the landlord, and I sent his steward—this man here—a hundred marks, that he might speak a good word for me."

The amazed look of the accused recipient in his turn vouched his truth.

"By whom did you send it?" asked the duke.

Barnes immediately pointed out his cousin, who on the first mention of the affair had shrunk out of sight, and would have escaped if he could.

"Ho, ho!" said Buckingham; "here is another plot, though in rather a different style. Bring him forward," he continued; and Bradlaw, frightened even out of his assurance, was brought pale and trembling before his judge.

"So, Mr. Traitor-catcher," said the duke, "you hear the charge against you. What have you done with the hundred marks this man gave you?" he added abruptly.

"Please your majesty"—said Bradlaw.

"Nonsense, man," interrupted the duke impatiently; "I am no majesty, only the Duke of Buckingham—what have you done with this money?"

"O please your majesty—your grace I mean," said Bradlaw, throwing himself on his knees, "forgive me, and I'll tell you all. I have the money in my pocket," he continued, hastened in his confession by the duke's frown.

"Hold man, let him alone," said Buckingham, as Barnes approached his cousin threateningly on hearing this. "Restore it this instant," he went on, addressing Bradlaw, "and thank the presence of

these ladies that I do not have you soundly cuffed for making so free with my household in your reports."

Bradlaw hastily drew from his pocket a heavy purse, and placed it in his cousin's extended hand. Buckingham watched the proceeding with interest, and as the countryman, with blunt thanks to him for espousing his cause, was pocketing it, he said, "So, my friend, you had intended this sum for the purchase of my steward—you shall have his master at the same price; come, give me the hundred marks, and the lease is yours." Barnes stared, but obeyed. "And in future," continued the judge, "when you have a cause in hand bring the arguments to me," and he shook the purse; "and as to the matter of these traitors, I say, let them kill the king in the same manner as often as they please, and I will answer for the royal approbation, if they first take my opinion as to the time—and now let us finish the Careless Lover.

M. J. R.

SONG OF HOPE.

BY MRS. ABDY.

THERE is a hope, a radiant hope, that warms the heart of youth,
Bidding it deem this vale of tears a paradise of truth,
It tells of firm devoted love that knows not how to change,
Of faithful and enduring friends who grow not cold and strange,
Of sunny days and starry nights on life's untroubled sea—
Such was the first delusive hope that cast a spell o'er me.

There is a hope more dazzling still, that glads our riper years,
With stirring busy images the eager mind it cheers;
It tells of scenes of courtly state, and sounds of silvery praise,
The coronal of flashing gems, the wreath of envied bays;
Amid earth's great and gifted ones it bids us proudly be—
Such was the second cheating hope that cast a spell o'er me!

There is a hope divine and pure, a hope that never dies,
It dwells upon a glorious land beyond the vaulted skies;
It bids us lift our chastened thoughts earth's vanities above,
It aids us to support the loss of human faith and love;
It tells us of a future life with spirits blest and free—
Such is my last best hope, O Lord—a hope that rests on Thee.

DOUBLE JEALOUSY.

BY MRS. LEIGH CLIFFE.

MATRIMONY has been compared to all manner of odd things; and as, in the case of love, two people are seldom of the same opinion on the subject, we will, for the edification of the "gentle reader," give an outline of the wedded life of an old friend, whose name has before appeared in this, the cynosure of miscellanies.

It was on one of those delightful autumn evenings when the sun, tired of his garish brilliancy, rests with milder refulgence on the dark leaves of the forest trees, plays gently over the purple-fruited vines, and tinges the distant clouds with that glorious light, which even the gifted pencil of a Claude could poorly imitate, that a group were collected beneath and around the flower-trellissed porch of the more than commonly comfortable residence of a small landed proprietor in the province of Normandy. Happy faces were there; and the joyous laugh of three children, who were gambolling in the buoyancy of health and youth, awakened the far distant echo with the reverberations of their merriment. It was with a mingled feeling of pride and pleasure that the group, which were seated within the porch, watched the sportive gambols of their more infantine companions; and, ever and anon, expressions of delight escaped their lips, as they bounded like young fawns at play, past the spot where they were resting. What can be more interesting to the sobered mind—the reflective period that intervenes between maturity and middle age—than to view and comment upon the growth of intellect and strength in those that are to fill up the vacant places in society—the "void that Nature in her wisdom asks"—when we rest in peace with our forefathers? If the bosom has a gem, that is it.

But we have as yet not given life to our personages; and in defiance of the opinion of Shakspeare, who tells us there is nothing in a name, we must inform the reader that the persons who were enjoying the cool breezes of evening in the locale we have been describing, were our old and particular friend, the wooden-legged sergeant, his fair wife, Suzette, and Madame Niquet, who was now a buxom widow, and domesticated with her cousins. The younger portion of the party were the olive branches that graced the wedded life of the sergeant and Suzette, who were living examples of the fallacy of the proverb that tells us hasty marriages are productive of protracted repentance. Her very glance spoke of the satisfaction of her heart; and although a few white hairs were sprinkled like a slight shower of sleet upon the dark locks that fell over the weather-beaten brows of the sergeant, there was a healthiness of joy beaming in his eye, that spoke of his contentedness with his lot in life. He was one of those spirits that never meet troubles with complimentary repinings; he took the world, as he did his wife, for better, for worse. If all men would do the same, they would be happier than they generally are: but men are strange

animals,—though, to say truth, they are far better than they have been depicted by angry and disappointed women. Men are what women make them; the puppets that act when they are pulled by a string; and that string is *woman's will*. It is too true that few know how to pull the cord with judgment; and from that incaution arises half the disquietudes of matrimonial existence. Suzette had acted on the wiser plan: she had soothed her husband in the moments of irritation; and by her blandishments, when he was joyous, made him forget that the wayward pettishness of nature had ever caused a frown to rest upon his brow.

"We shall have been married ten years to-morrow, my own Suzette," said the sergeant, as he gently pressed her still fair cheek to his own, "and many have been the changes we have seen around us in the time. The aged have fallen, and the young have flown; the only thing that appears unchanged and unchangeable, is the strength of our love."

"Yet," replied Suzette, "this day ten years nothing could equal my horror and hatred of you. I little thought, at that moment, happiness would ever have a reaction, and come back to a heart that was then on the point of breaking from the influence of a delusion. There must be a witchcraft in love; for, like moonshine, it shadows forth such fanciful forms, that we sometimes start as we glance at them; and then laugh at our folly, for not having seen clearly through the vapour that surrounded us. But even during the moonshine of first, foolish, girlish love, the heart hath an avenue always open to tenderness and affection. At the most perilous moment of my life, I was taught the economy of the heart; and you know best, Mercier, whether I have not stored up its kindest feelings for you."

"They bloomed in their season, dearest," said the sergeant, "and escaped the blight with which they were momentarily threatened."

"For my part, I never believed in the invisibility of love, until I saw it illustrated by the example before me," said Madame Niquet, with something like an air of sarcasm. "I certainly was very fond of my poor dear departed husband, and have worn the horrible costume of a widow for two full years, although I must confess that I wish the first inventress of these odious specimens of female head-gear had been sacrificed in the dungeons of the Inquisition. But no woman ever could have fancied such a frightful appendage to the sorrows of a woman. It must have been a *man*; some spiteful old creature, who wished to make his wife look as ugly as himself. I always had a fear of widowhood; and that was the reason why I dreaded poor Niquet's dying. Every time he had the gout, I am sure I suffered a martyrdom, and felt ten times worse than he ever did when the March winds brought on the rheumatism; and when, at the latter end of his existence, he used, poor man, (I could cry my eyes out when I think of it,) to be half strangled with the asthma, I never could sleep at night without dreaming of bombazin and crape."

The "tear had ceased to fall" with Madame Niquet for a *cold* husband, and the sergeant began to suspect that she knew somewhat more of the invisibility of love, than she thought it proper or prudent to avow. It was evident that she was a pupil of the modern school of

philosophy, and was averse to let useless sighs and tears disturb the serenity of her repose; and but that her condition in life required the observance of the accustomed ceremonials, he began to question whether his poor cousin, Mercier, might not have rested with his ancestors, and have been speedily forgotten. Madame Niquet, to do her justice, had been very particular in observing the quarantine of seclusion for the prescribed time, and had not given anything like open encouragement to the many aspirants to a place in her affections, but it was evident that there was something more on the tapis than was publicly acknowledged.

Discoveries of importance are generally made by accident; and, at the present moment, it was not very difficult to perceive that Madame Niquet was not inclined to be a party involved in solving the mystery. Day by day, however, she appeared to throw off the mask of sorrow; and it was not until she came bounding, like a school-girl, some few days after the commencement of our tale, into the apartment of Suzette and the sergeant, that any clue could be obtained towards the elucidation of her tactics d'amour. She had now cast off the last slight semblance of her widowed state, and with more than her usual elasticity of spirits, announced the arrival of Captain Philippe Survilliers at the chateau. The sergeant received the intelligence with a prolonged whistle, which intimated anything but true satisfaction at the information thus unexpectedly communicated; Suzette looked rather foolish, and Madame Niquet assumed that kind of air which seems to say there is something more in the wind than you have yet dreamed of.

"And *if* the captain has come back to the chateau, I do not see, cousin Niquet, what consequence it can be to you or me. You have grown older, and I hope he has grown wiser, than he was ten years ago."

Madame Niquet elevated her head rather proudly, and looked at the sergeant as spitefully as if he was an offender that a glance could wither. She condescended only to exclaim "Umph!" and was making a hasty exit, when a loud burst of laughter from the sergeant caused her to turn round, and lay aside her momentary dignity.

"Do not be angry, cousin Niquet, at my reminding you that you have turned over a few pages of the annuals. Why, look round at my three little illustrations; they are the finest helps to a man's memory, and frequently prevent him from doing foolish things."

"And pray what foolish thing have I done?" cried Madame Niquet, with some slight degree of asperity.

"The foolish thing you are *doing*, is believing that Philippe Survilliers is a slave to your charms, without having a single reason to base your vanity upon. Truly, widows have odd fancies."

"I may have *my* reasons for thinking as I please, and what I please, without consulting you, I suppose, cousin Mercier; and if the captain should recollect, now that he has returned, that since my poor dear husband died he has written me certain very pretty billets, I presume my good cousin Mercier will not object to a union between the families."

"But I should, at present, have very strong objections, insurmountable objections, Madame Niquet; and it would not be very pleasant

to my fair cousin to marry a man with a wife, who is not likely to die off at a moment's notice to quit, even to please the heiress presumptive to her husband's hand. Captain Survilliers *is married*, madame!"

"Married! impossible!"

"Then the impossibility is of some years standing," replied the sergeant; "but you seem always to be in a dream, Madame Niquet, forming a world of your own, and peopling it with imaginary beings, that, like the fairies, only make their appearance to true believers in the ideal."

Whatever might be the private opinion of Madame Niquet on the subject of the temporary altercation that had taken place between her and her cousin, she nevertheless did not think proper to give it utterance. Suzette had remained silent: probably she might have felt something like jealousy at the preference given by Philippe to her cousin; or it might have been that she was fearful that some awkward reminiscences might be awakened in the mind of the sergeant, by the notification of the arrival of her old suitor at the Chateau de Survilliers.

The veteran was evidently somewhat annoyed at the presence of his former rival in the immediate neighbourhood of his residence. He was in one of those odd humours in which men who really love their wives sometimes indulge, and scarcely knew whether he ought to suspect Suzette of encouraging his return, for it was unannounced, and therefore unexpected; or whether the love of play, in which Philippe was known to participate, had caused him to make a precipitate retreat from Paris. Ideas floated across his imagination that were by no means pleasant; and the slight confusion which Suzette had evinced on the first announcement of Philippe's return, fed the embers of jealousy, which only wanted a breath of wind to fan them into a flame. Jealousy, like love, seems to be the "Will o' the Wisp" of the mind; and is productive of more evils in domestic life, than all the other passions that are mixed up in the composition of human nature: and Suzette began to fear, although she had been silent, that her husband might consider her eyes had given expression to feelings that, with her, had died a natural death; feelings that shone with a rainbow-beam over a little moment of her existence, and faded away into nothingness as speedily as they had been born.

The return of Philippe was not hailed with much demonstration of joy by the villagers; he had been long absent, and little benefit was anticipated from his return. When self has to do with public affairs, the profit is always calculated previous to the display of sentiment; therefore, as the expectations were on a limited scale, the rejoicings were modified by a prudent reserve. Besides, he was married; and married men sometimes lose *caste*; though that is not always the case in France; nor, as certain volumes attest, in countries somewhat nearer home. But although Philippe was married, he was not a whit reformed. The dew-drop that clings to the petals of a rose, exists not on a tenure more fragile than the promises of amendment made by a man that can be led on by every shadow of pleasure. The same laxity of morals, the same disregard of principle that marked the progress of his youth, still distinguished his character; and not even the posses-

sion of a wife, whose amiable qualities might have put the unamiable propensities of his nature to shame, could induce him to cast off the principles he had, unfortunately for himself, imbibed in his youth. They clung to him with a tenacity that defied expulsion. One of the brightest passages that we meet with in looking over the backward pages of life, is the record that is traced by memory of kind or noble acts performed by ourselves towards any of our fellow-creatures. Philippe had but few of these reminiscences; and, therefore, the past was ever to him as a sealed book, to which he was seldom desirous of referring.

Philippe was not slow in making advances towards a renewal of friendship with Sergeant Mercier, who, although he would have preferred that distance had still divided them, could not refuse to be on amicable terms. To say truth, the sergeant began to feel a little uneasy at his frequent visits to the cottage; and though he tried to persuade himself that it was only for the purpose of indulging in a flirtation with Madame Niquet, he fancied he had observed him once or twice look somewhat too significantly at Suzette: and, like many silly men who let their fancies run riot against reason, he was not content to keep his thoughts to himself, but in a foolish moment thought proper to make Suzette his confidante, who, not being the best pleased at being suspected, without having given him cause of offence, complained most bitterly to Madame Niquet of the cruelty and injustice of her husband. As the latter lady had not forgotten the sergeant for reminding her of the approach of those disagreeable little appendages to ladies that follow the steps of time, and are known by the familiar term of crows'-feet, she entered fully into the details of Suzette's disquietude, and, with some slight degree of jealousy that Philippe should have glanced at any other person than herself, promised that she would do the best in her power to make her cousin Mercier own that he was the veriest *Ane du Village*. Females should not betray the secrets of their sex; but let it be universally known, that when a woman is resolved to make a man look like a fool, she succeeds in nine instances out of ten; and it is very extraordinary that men generally appear anxious to place themselves in very equivocal situations. Accident or design favours the female speculator; while the male one, Heaven help him! considers her to be the *beau ideal* of innocence and simplicity.

It was not long before Philippe Survilliers put himself in a position that led on to consequences which he had not taken into his calculation. Tactitian as he was in the mysteries of the heart, he had, in this instance, miscalculated his resources.

The shadows of evening were gradually closing over the last beams of the day; the sergeant was occupied in attending to the affairs of his little farm, while Suzette was enjoying the freshness of the breeze on the lawn before the cottage, and carolling one of those sweet little *chansons* that are peculiar to the peasantry of Normandy, as she rested herself, after the fashion of her countrywomen, on two chairs, when her quietude was suddenly broken in upon by the appearance of Captain Survilliers.

Suzette started up in alarm, half suppressing a shriek, with which,

at the first moment of her surprise, she was about to summon her husband to her assistance, while Philippe imploringly entreated her to be silent, and at least to listen to what he had to say. But, deaf to his pleadings, Suzette was hastily retiring into the cottage, when her further progress was arrested by his seizing her hand.

"Suzette," he exclaimed, "this coyness is cruel. Think you that I believe your affectation of regard for that dilapidated piece of human nature, your husband? It is not only improbable, but it is actually impossible."

"It is nevertheless true," rejoined Suzette, calmly but firmly.

A smile of incredulity curled the lip of Philippe, as he replied,

"I suppose that I married for love also: united myself for love to a woman whose only recommendation was the *louis d'ors* that rested invitingly on the counter of the *banque*. Why, charming Suzette, you have more than enough of rustic simplicity."

Philippe attempted to clasp her in his arms, but Suzette sprang from him with the speed of a frightened bird, and beckoning to her children, who were playing at some distance, they came in an instant at her bidding. She threw her arms around them, and looking earnestly in the face of Philippe, said, firmly, "Behold, sir, here are my protectors."

"Would you destroy me?" said Philippe.

"Rather say I would *save* you," replied Suzette.

"Save!" exclaimed Philippe. "Save!—this is worse than mockery. You know not how deeply, dearly I love you. In my case preservation is destruction, dearest Suzette."

"Dearest Suzette!" was immediately echoed by a female voice in a tone of mockery from a little clump of shrubs that grew close beside the spot where Suzette was standing, and re-echoed by the deep bass voice of the sergeant, who advanced from the cottage at the same moment that Madame Niquet swiftly emerged from the concealment of the shrubbery. The loud taunting laugh with which that lady greeted the momentarily subdued captain, spoke rather of women's passion than mirth, and the cold sneering politeness that the old sergeant evinced, as he thanked him for his very kind *attentions* and *intentions* towards his wife, showed him that he had got snared by some means, whether by design or accident he knew not. A dilemma was not new to Philippe, but he had not calculated at being so suddenly surprised, and therefore paused a while to consider in what manner it would be best to place his new assailants in the background. He soon found that if he trusted only to his wits for his escape, he must act warily, for Madame Niquet seemed determined to give a breadth of colouring to the picture that he had not anticipated. In one hand she held before his visual faculties a somewhat crumpled piece of paper, bearing the impress of his signature, while with the forefinger of the other she pointed to a passage which appeared to create anything but pleasant sensations in the mind of Philippe. Those black and white evidences of the fallibility of promises are generally productive of mischief, and Philippe determined for the future to set his face against all those modern improvements that tend to the furtherance of universal intellectuality. When a man has jeopardized his cha-

racter frequently, he becomes less careful of concealing it, but still it is an awkward position to be placed in, when apologies seem to freeze upon the lips like the droppings from the eaves in a winter's frost, that coagulate before they can legally divorce themselves from the edge of the tiles. Boldness was the only resource left him; and as he did not think it necessary to consult truth on the occasion, or even to consider that circumstances must correspond to ensure the belief of his story, his exculpatory address was a confused mass of palpable improbabilities. He assured the sergeant that his attentions to Suzette were Platonic, perfectly innocent, and that they were simply intended to curb the vanity and check the troublesome advances of Madame Niquet, whose concealment he had observed, and was delighted to seize upon the opportunity which thus offered itself to convince her that, as a married man, he had a heart of adamant.

"A wonderful transformation," exclaimed Madame Niquet, sneeringly, "but too sudden to be credited. May I presume to ask Captain Survilliers whether his heart was so cold, cramped, and hardened, when he wrote to me as his dearest, sweetest, best beloved, angelic Adele Niquet?"

Philippe bit his lips with vexation, while his tormentor seemed to take almost a savage delight in making him writhe under her satire. The *exposé* before Suzette was what he most dreaded, but on turning round in the hope of conciliating Madame Niquet, he found himself *tête-à-tête* with his annoyer, a situation somewhat disagreeable, though he was, on the other hand, glad to be with her alone. The sergeant had led Suzette quietly away from the scene of action, and so deeply had Philippe been engaged with his own reflections, that her exit had been unperceived. It was like giving new life to Philippe to discover that he had now but one foe to contend with, and indulging such a flattering opinion of the female sex, as to believe them capable of being fooled by men at their pleasure, he began to try the experiment upon the feelings of the lady, of whom he now stood in some degree of awe. With all his knowledge of human nature, he knew little of the arts of women. He had studied their susceptibility, love of sentiment, enthusiasm, and sympathy, with the romantic ideality of feeling, but he had yet to learn that they could give a strong contrast to that delicate softness and sensibility when the fineness of those feelings were outraged. It was in vain that he endeavoured to soothe the angry feelings of the disappointed coquette, who quitted his presence, like a sibyl of old, with a warning to beware of the future.

The scene which took place between Suzette and the sergeant in the interior of the cottage was a far more sentimental one than that which we have just described. She was weeping bitterly, her cheek resting against that of her eldest child, who stood in silent wonderment at this unusual display of sorrow, ever and anon mingling a tear of sympathy with those that fell from the eyes of Suzette. Neither she nor the sergeant seemed disposed for some minutes to dispel the haughty reserve that prevailed; he had no cause to chide, and she had no right to blame; therefore they were both placed in that very odd predicament in which man and wife sometimes stand, wishing to have a comfortable quarrel, yet not knowing how to begin it, for the

simple want of being able to find the shadow of a reason for the indulgence of their laudable desires. At length the sergeant did venture, in a very subdued tone of voice, to ask his wife the cause of her present sorrow, and then resumed the interesting employment of seesawing himself in a chair, accompanying each alternate motion with that melodious matrimonial melody that partakes of the mingled qualities of tone that is produced by the union of a yawn with a sigh. Suzette raised her eyes towards him with an expression that would have been irresistible to any man not wholly insensible to the pleading glances of a woman. She looked at him timidly, as though she feared that the inquiry he had made were to be the prelude to a torrent of reproaches; but no censure came, and the sergeant looked almost foolishly humble as he said, "I believe, Suzette, I have been for some days making a most egregious ass of myself."

"In what way, my dear Mercier?" asked Suzette.

"By my idle suspicions," replied the sergeant.

"Are you jesting, Mercier, or is it really true that you indulged a thought, even for a moment, to my prejudice?"

"I have seen my error, and repent it," rejoined the sergeant.

The deepening colour that rose to the hitherto pale cheeks of Suzette proved that she felt the force of the confession. Putting her child on one side, she advanced to her husband, and placing her hand, that was trembling with the conflicting emotions by which she was agitated, on his shoulder, she said,

"Is it possible that you could give credence even to an idea that militated against my proved affection for you? Have I sought for woman's bane—the honey of man's adulation? Have I ever left the quiet of our hearth for the fête and the frolic? Have I been the careless wife, the neglectful mother, that you could indulge suspicions which you ought to have spurned with scorn from your imagination? It was not just, Mercier, to condemn me unheard!"

The sergeant drew his breath laboriously; his sight was dimmed by something like a tear, and, as he pressed Suzette closely to his bosom, he exclaimed, "Forgive me!" and sobbed like a child whose spirits have been subdued and almost broken by chidings.

Where affection exists, forgiveness is never refused; and, conscious of her own innocence in thought, word, and deed, Suzette scrupled not to give him the kiss of renewed love and friendship, and the past was banished like an unpleasant dream from her mind.

"Quarrel and kiss!" cried Madame Niquet, who, having sent Philippe again on his travels, entered at this moment of perfect reconciliation—"that is just what my dear departed husband and I used to do. All that, I am very ready to allow, is right in wedded life; but widows, with the crows'-feet, cousin Mercier, must quarrel without kissing, you know."

"Which is much to their sorrow, cousin Niquet," replied the sergeant.

"And pray why should widows be so very sorrowful?" inquired Madame Niquet, with an affectation of gravity.

"Not because they are widowed," said the sergeant, "but because they cannot find faith in man a second time. Suzette and I shall not

be the worse for this little *brouillerie*, and you will, I hope, be better, since you have found out you were made the dupe of a lover *au tors et au travers*."

"*Toujours constant, jamais fidele*, is the motto of all men," replied Madame Niquet. "Philippe shall be my dupe yet, or I have not the wit of a widow. But I shall want the assistance of you and Suzette for the accomplishment of my designs. They are but in outline as yet, and I have a desire to make them perfect specimens of art. You need not be jealous another time, cousin Mercier, for I will inform you, beforehand, that both you and your wife—let her blush if she will—must be my active agents. Why, you look frightened, sergeant! Well, well, that does not surprise me, for I think if Suzette had as many wrinkles in her face as there are pot-hooks and hangers in a boy's first copy-book, he would make strong love to her the very first opportunity that might offer."

"Would he?" exclaimed the sergeant, starting up like a warrior who is summoned to battle by the beating of the drum—"would he?"

"Bah! you know he would, and I intend he should."

"Are you mad, cousin Niquet?" cried the sergeant, stamping his wooden leg upon the brick floor, much to the detriment of the baked earth.

"No," replied madame, "but so it must be, to prevent your having a return of your old complaint;—a relapse, you know, is always exceedingly dangerous. I have secured a helpmate for you in the person of his wife, who has as strong a desire to cure him of his roving propensities as I have to box his ears soundly for his conduct to me."

"Leave me out of the plot, if you please," said Suzette. "It appears that my happiness has already been nearly wrecked in consequence of suspicions, which, I am ready to allow, circumstances contributed to strengthen."

"To prove that I am not jealous," interrupted the sergeant, "for once in my life, I will readily sign and seal a bond, giving unto my wife full authority to act as a *femme sole*, to flirt, flatter, fidget, and frighten Captain Philippe Survilliers, to the utmost extent that my fair cousin with the crows'-feet may consider advisable."

"Personalities, sergeant, are like wrinkles, very unpleasant companions to a lady's private memorandums, cousin Mercier. But let the offence pass. To me it is but like the cobweb that tickles the nose as one passes through a shrubbery—we brush it away, and think of it no more. But, my dear Suzette, you positively must be a person in my projected drama, or it cannot be brought out. I shall arrange the situations, you shall receive the applause, while my worthy cousin, who is cast to play the *rôle* of Cupid *pro tem.*, shall not, in the end, have a leg to stand upon, not even a crow's-foot."

Madame Niquet, whom private pique had made the warm advocate of public virtue, had entered into a league, offensive and defensive, with Madame Survilliers, who, having property over which her husband had no control, and in which he had no interest except such as his good behaviour might warrant him in expecting, was as anxious to reduce him to the standard of a reasonable being as any other woman

placed under similar circumstances could possibly be. She had one unfortunate failing, and that was an inordinate degree of love for Philippe, whose follies she sometimes strove to palliate, and whose faults, after a little lady-like pouting, she was always induced to forgive. The jealousy of Madame Niquet first made her acquainted with her husband's love for Suzette, and, after much consultation between the two ladies, it was resolved, that if it were possible to make Philippe suffer in the same way, some hopes might yet be retained of bringing him back to his home, a steady, willing-to-be-governed, married gentleman.

It was not long ere the plot which had been planned by Madame Niquet was put in execution. Madame Surveilliers, who was one of the loving portion of the creation, and perhaps more affectionate to the deceptive than she would have been towards the faithful possessor of her heart, was anxious to try any plan that was likely to restore the truant to her arms. Frequent consultations were privately held between her and the sergeant on the subject that bound her heart a captive to its pains. The probable effects of the scheme were discussed again and again by the parties most interested, and the lady commissioner, who was the prime mover of the conspiracy, was appointed the plenipotentiary to arrange, and, perchance, aggravate the matters in dispute between the contracting parties. O those dear, delightful opportunities of signal revenge upon the betrayers of the feelings! They are the very manna that falls in the wilderness of love, to feed the hungry spirits of disappointed damsels—the leaven that raises the passions from a state of torpidity. Memory sometimes runs riot, and, like a midnight wassailer, is lost in forgetfulness; but when love is in the question, it has a tenacity which nothing but death or destruction can sever. The poor trout, tortured by the angler, strives with all its powers to escape from the barbed hook—but in vain; and women, when once deeply, indelibly in love, cannot get the stain out of the heart by the application of all the acids that have ever been compounded by the skill of the chemist. Unwillingly, Suzette was, at length, persuaded to become a party in the attempt to rationalize a rake, who seemed not to be disposed to give up the empty dreamings of dissipated youth. Philippe had ever been a slave to folly, and, as his sworn tormentor said, “might be led to play the fool at any moment by a woman's smile.”

The year had passed on from its springtide to its fall, before an opportunity offered to carry the grand measures which female ingenuity had devised—the moon, one autumn, not having been roused from her slumbers, or, like a lazy serving maiden, wishing to steal half an hour's more repose than Mistress Nature generally thought necessary to allow, had scarcely begun to draw back the cloud-curtains of her bed, when indistinctness so completely veiled the localities around the cottage, that the approach of a visitor could only be known by the echo of his footsteps, that Suzette was sitting alone in her cottage before the cheering embers of a wood fire; the sergeant, Madame Niquet, and all the other members of the family, being assisting at one of those village fêtes which are in France the general Sunday nights' attraction to all except the higher classes. Philippe was generally, on these occasions, one of the gayest of the group with which he condescended

to mingle, and finding so fair an opportunity offer itself for another attempt upon the heart of Suzette, he stole away from the *guinguette*, and without waiting to attend to the customary forms of society, entered the cottage, and began again most impressively to plead his suit. Suzette, who was really alarmed, burst into tears, and entreated him to leave the house, if he did not intend to seal her domestic misery for ever. A smile of triumph passed over the features of Philippe, as he replied, "Why, even should echo be a tell-tale, as the old gossips tell us she is, her voice would not be likely to reach the ears of my good old friend, who is engaged in admiring the ankles of the dancing girls, while you are left to indulge in the delightful amusement afforded by solitary reflections. Ah, Suzette! had you been mine, mine own adored, devotedly-attached love, how different had been your fate! pleasure would have gilded the passing hours,—happiness would have been in your grasp, and I should have been spared the misery of being hourly annoyed by the ostentatious display of an affection that is as cloying to my taste as sugar is to the palate of a person who detests sweets. Our present meeting calls back the bliss of former times—when we met in the gaiety of youth, with hearts unfettered by the chains that the customs of the world cast around us, when I believed that your affections were mine. Alas! how fatally have I been deceived!"

"I have not deceived you, sir," replied Suzette; "and if you think proper to let an illusion cheat your senses, I cannot see that I have any right to be blamed. Let me ask you whether I, as a wife and a mother, have not duties to perform to my children and husband, and to heaven, that you ought to feel shame at asking me to forego? You would not wish to see my children worse than motherless; scorned, taunted with their mother's guilt: to behold the man who once saved your life, drooping to an untimely grave through the treachery of the person for whom he risked his own life. No, no, Philippe, I cannot, even now, believe this of you."

"Believe that I love you, pretty pleader," said Philippe, "and leave moralizing to that sober, steady person, your wedded encumbrance."

It was one of the most critical moments in the life of Suzette. Past times played like a dream over her memory, and Philippe fancied that his power over her affections was secure, when a hurried knocking at the outer door awakened him from the mental delusion in which he was indulging, and induced him to seek concealment in the adjoining room. He had scarcely time to make his escape before Madame Niquet entered. She was apparently almost choked with convulsive sobbings; and as she contrived to conceal one side of her face with her handkerchief, Philippe, who was peeping through the half-opened door, did not observe the signs she made to Suzette before she began to explain the cause of her agitation.

"Suzette, my dear Suzette," cried Madame Niquet, with an emphasis that was spitefully accurate, "it is as we feared; that horrible Madame Survilliers, that pattern of propriety, has succeeded in her attempts to wean the affections of the sergeant from you. I could not have believed it, had I not been an eye-witness. I watched them: my poor deceived Suzette, and—I am sure it would kill you if I were

to tell you all. Good heavens, child, how pale you look !—I will get you a glass of water before I tell you one word more ;” and she hastened to the apartment where Philippe had sought concealment. It was impossible to effect an escape. Madame Niquet shrieked in affected affright, and the hydra-hearted lover was compelled to come forth to listen to a tale anything but pleasant to his self-love, and Madame Niquet took especial care to make the worst of a bad business, and soon succeeded in rendering Philippe as completely miserable as any married man, whose wife has her *own* property in her *own* hands, can possibly be made, when he has something like a suspicion that she may take a fancy to leave *his* purse empty. The condolence offered by Madame Niquet was as jesuitical as his own proceedings, and Suzette, who had buried her face in an embroidered *tablier*, appeared to be too much agitated to give any opinion upon the widow’s recapitulation of passing events. Many men are deceived with their eyes open, and, in this instance, Philippe was a martyr to his belief. Instigated by Madame Niquet, he accompanied her and Suzette to the place where he was assured his wife was planning his ruin with Sergeant Mercier. The old-established axiom that the causers of pain suffer it with less fortitude than those who strive to ameliorate the sorrows of their fellow-creatures, was proved to be true in the case of Philippe Survilliers. His conscience rose up in judgment against him, and, for once in his life, he really felt surprised that any person living had the power to render him uncomfortable. He was disquieted in his mind ; vague thoughts flitted across his imagination, that seemed to offer corroborative evidence of the truth of the story he had heard, and amongst the chaotic mass of circumstances that bewildered him, he thought he could discover something like a foundation for the intelligence that made him at the moment miserable.

Madame Niquet, after having extorted from him a promise of secrecy and silence, pioneered him to his own chateau, and placed him in a position where all that passed between the sergeant and his wife could be distinctly seen and heard. The sergeant was seated on a couch beside Madame Survilliers, whose hand rested carelessly upon his shoulders, while she appeared to be looking in his face with a degree of interest that might have roused the jealousy of any moderately attached person. Philippe’s eyes were employed in watching the apparently affectionate pair, and his ears had full occupation in listening to the smoothly-turned sentences that were addressed by the lady to the sergeant. That *his* wife could be false had never entered most distantly into the ideas of Philippe, and the desperate wound that was thus given by the discovery to his self-esteem was increased by Madame’s expressing almost the same thoughts, words, and wishes that he had been accustomed to give utterance to in his interviews with Suzette. It was with difficulty that Madame Niquet could, at times, keep him in his concealment ; and it must be acknowledged that she charitably endeavoured to increase his agitation by every little device she could summon to her aid. Suzette, meanwhile, had withdrawn to a distant part of the salon, and whether the convulsive movements that were at times discernible were caused by her sobs or laughter, it would have taken a wiser person than Philippe to decide. Madame

Survilliers was eloquent in her eulogiums on the manly graces of the sergeant, and disparaged even the few good qualities that her husband possessed as effectively as his most bitter enemy could have desired.

"Did you fancy, my dear sergeant," said the lady, "that I married him for love? The thought is too ridiculous. It was with me a mere *marriage de convenance*. He wanted money, and, to say truth, my reputation being somewhat soiled, I thought it best to repair it by taking a husband."

"A wedded encumbrance, my dearest," rejoined the sergeant, "but it was an excusable sacrifice on your part. It is ridiculous to think how the captain fancies, while he is eyeing the dancing girls, and playing with their ringlets, as the breeze brushes them towards his cheek, that his wife is left to enjoy her own solitary reflections."

"With you for a companion, *mon brave!*" responded madame.

"Though echo is a tell-tale, mine own adored, devotedly-attached love," continued the sergeant, "she will not be likely to whisper of our endearments in his ear. I know you never loved him: indeed, such a circumstance would have been as impossible as that I could have forgotten the bliss of former times."

"His very professions of affection are as cloying to my taste, as sugar is to the palate of one who detests sweets," said madame; "and being aware that some day a discovery would most likely take place, I contrived to keep my money in my own power; now I shall at once provide for the children;—the bond is prepared, and ready for my signature, and that once done, my brave sergeant, we will fly, and leave Phillipe to moralize on the faithfulness of his wife, if you still think you really love me."

"Pretty pleader," said the sergeant, bending over her hand in an attitude that roused the wrath of Philippe to fever heat.

"Fly! whither, madam?" cried Captain Survilliers furiously, as he rushed into the apartment, despite of the efforts of Madame Niquet to detain him longer to listen to the punishment that had been prepared for him, and he raved against women until his vocabulary of invectives appeared to be quite exhausted. Suzette and Madame Niquet filled up the background of the picture; and each took occasion to remind him of his professed affection for themselves.

"Find consolation in my smiles," said Madame Niquet; "sunbeams are always most lovely after a shower; and you have so frequently praised the sunniness of my eyes, you know, my own dear captain."

"Remember your promises to me," echoed Suzette.

"Peace, devils!" exclaimed Philippe, writhing under the agony of rage, mortification, and disappointment, "man's curse is woman!"

"Why, captain!" shrieked Madame Niquet, at the very top of her voice, "two hours ago Suzette was an angel; and I was *once* your angel also. Why, you used to kneel and pray to me. Come, kneel down, and let me hear you say your prayers again!"

Madame Survilliers began to feel something like pity for her half-distracted helpmate, and with calmness assured him that, like himself, she found it impossible to account for the bestowal of her affections. She regretted that it should be the cause of pain to him; but, after the present rather unpleasant discovery, she thought it would be better that he should be put in possession of the whole truth.

"Yes," interrupted the sergeant, "you know, captain, that *love* is as invincible as the grand army; therefore, as things are *as* they are, bear your fate with philosophy, as I have done."

"And," said Madame Niquet, "instead of reviling and upbraiding two poor heart-broken women, whose love for you is the cause of their anguish, soothe their sorrows; for their tears, while they are clinging round you, give evidence that you will not be left disconsolate."

Philippe grew furious: his wife kept provokingly calm, and entreated him to believe that nothing but her making a full confession of all her *past* and *present* follies, could convince him that she was acting with the most perfect propriety, both towards him and *the children*, by adopting the course of conduct she was now pursuing.

"Children!" exclaimed Philippe, with a look of horror.

"Let me confess all without interruption," continued Madame Survilliers; "permit me to call in my two loves, and have the happiness of hearing them call me mother. Behold them," she said, as two fine girls entered at her bidding, and around whose necks she fondly folded her arms, while Philippe was with difficulty prevented from laying violent hands upon these unexpected additions to his family circle, by the united exertions of Suzette and Madame Niquet, while his wife defied his power, and dared him to execute any one of the various threats which he held out to reduce her again to obedience.

The scene now began to assume a new character. Philippe sank on a couch, half exhausted from passion and mortified pride; while Madame Survilliers acted her *rôle* in the drama with what is called a startling effect; so much so, that Philippe began to evince symptoms of womanish weakness, which his unrelenting helpmate seemed to take pleasure in exciting, and Madame Niquet spitefully contrived to add fuel to the flame, whenever an opportunity offered.

"They are two sweet little darlings, captain," said Madame Niquet. "Do but look at them, and fancy them your own. You know you have had many odd fancies, captain, that have proved quite as delusive. Why, you ought to show something like a fatherly feeling towards the little ones."

"The captain is considering which of the twain is to be his favourite," said the sergeant; "or probably debating in his mind whether his present position between the fire of two rivals will be long tenable."

Philippe began to be more vehement than polite in his expressions, often giving vent to ebullitions of rage that would have been startling to those around him, had they not been well assured that he was powerless. Madame Survilliers began to find that it was almost time to bring this scene to a close. The tell-tale dew that dimmed her eye, told her that she could not much longer conceal the feelings of her heart; and after a struggle to assume a degree of calmness, she addressed herself to her husband. "Philippe," she said, "we understand each other better than we have hitherto done. My claims upon your affection were 'the louis d'ors that rested so invitingly on the counter of the Banque;' therefore, as our ideas so perfectly assimilate, we shall not quarrel on that subject. Neither need we dispute respecting my disposing of those said louis d'ors, which are of right

my own, as it may best please me ; for you would have liberally given them to the children of Suzette. You see, Philippe, that I know all ; you have been betrayed. One parting favour, however, I must ask, and I will not hear of a refusal ;—it is that you will witness the bond by which I transfer my wealth to these dear children. Sanctioned by your name, my indiscretion will pass for virtue : and virtue, like other articles of commerce, is always marketable.”

“ I can die, madame,” said Philippe,” but I cannot, will not, sign my own disgrace.”

“ Pshaw !” returned madame, “ you have not been always so particular, as your promises to the two ladies who are now preferring their claims give evidence. I have borne your irregularities and neglect patiently and silently ; at the confession of my own faults you grow violent. Are not my rights equal to yours, or was woman created to suffer, not to speak ; to be wronged, yet not permitted to revenge ?—It appears that we both deceived ourselves when we married, and it is only at the hour of separating that each makes a full discovery of the follies of the other. I have long known that I possessed the *smallest* share of your heart, and that trifle I now render back ; it may at some future time be useful to yourself. Will you give your attestation to my signature to this bond ?”

“ Never !”

“ Then I thus perform my promise and *yours* ;” and Madame Surveilliers took a pen, and deliberately signed her name to the deed before her. Philippe was almost phrenzied with rage, and rushing forward he seized the paper, yet wet with the newly-written name, and was about to tear it into atoms when his hand was arrested by Suzette, who thought the poor man had been sufficiently punished by his sworn tormenters, and the action was followed by a laugh of bitter irony that plainly proved to Philippe he had been the subject of some mystification. The group gathered around the astonished Philippe, who stood holding the scrawl in his hand, and looking marvellously like a person placed within a magic circle.

“ Stratagems are fair, captain,” said the sergeant,” and you find ours has been a harmless one. The next time you trouble yourself about other men’s wives, bear the scene you have just seen acted in remembrance, and learn that, however inferior they may be in station, honour and virtue are as dearly prized by them as if they were your superiors. Had I not the most perfect confidence in the truth of my little Suzette, your conduct would have rendered our married life anything but happy. Your disappearance from the dance was not unobserved, your footsteps were closely followed by my fair cousin, who, some little time ago, believed that love and youth were of the class of evergreens, and although the exposure you have undergone may have been somewhat severe, you must acknowledge you richly deserved it. I beg to return him, madame, to your arms, to reclaim my two children, who were only lent for the evening, and, with your permission, keep Suzette to cheer my own domestic hearth free from the encumbrances of persevering married rakes.”

“ And I,” said Madame Niquet, curtsying formally, “ take this opportunity of returning to Captain Surveilliers the promises he volun-

tarily made me. As the law does not allow him two wives at a time, my case is hopeless, and his letters are useless; therefore, my dear faithless lover, put them into your pocket, or in the fire, as may best please you, and never trust a widow again, especially if you are at the same time making love to her cousin's wife."

"Without the consent of her husband," interrupted the sergeant.

"And without the consent of the wife also," said Madame Niquet.

"My permission was never asked," said Madame Survilliers, "and it might not have been granted if it had been, for few wives are inclined to give up their *purchases*."

"Although they sometimes make bad bargains," rejoined Madame Niquet.

"I have been a party in this little plot against you, though not a very active one," said Suzette; "but I have always indulged the idea that your errors arose rather from thoughtlessness than from worse motives. The most aggrieved parties in this case are the *wives*, and if they are inclined to look over what has passed, you may forgive the temporary punishment that they have inflicted upon you."

Philippe looked as foolish as any man caught in his own snare could possibly do. Suzette led him up to Madame Survilliers, who held out her hand, and with a smile, said, "Am I to understand that my husband confesses himself conquered by this stratagem of his wife, who loves him as much as he loves the *louis d'ors*?"

"No more on that subject," said Philippe; "I own I have deserved all that I have met with."

"And how much more?" asked Madame Niquet archly.

"As much as your charity can bestow upon me," replied Philippe.

"My charity is on a very limited scale with respect to men in general," said Madame Niquet; "but kiss and be friends, as the old saying goes, and endeavour to copy the happiness that now crowns, and I trust ever will do, the wedded life of the wooden-legged sergeant."

Philippe took the hand of his wife: Madame Niquet asserted that a tear fell upon it; and Madame Survilliers had, from that time to the present, no fault to find with her husband. We would therefore advise all wives, similarly situated, to call in henceforward a *widow* to arrange their domestic disputes.

THE METROPOLITAN.

SEPTEMBER, 1841.

LITERATURE.

NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

Isidora, or the Adventures of a Neapolitan; a Novel. By the Old Author in a New Walk, author of the "Pope and the Colonnas," &c. &c. &c. 3 vols.

This is a tale of love and chivalry, the action of which takes place at a time when chivalry had not yet wholly declined, and when love—ah, love has always been and ever will be the same in essence, modify it however we may. The scene opens upon us by the very best description of a bull-fight that we have yet met with. It introduces to us the hero in a manner the most brilliant, and at once invests him with the most intense interest, which clings to him until the last page. We are not going to anticipate the author's story, though we should have much pleasure in doing so, for really, after reading it attentively, it is a pleasure to think it over again; but did we thus make an abstract of that which will be so thoroughly enjoyed in the full perusal, we should remove from the reader that devouring anxiety for the forthcoming event, and that panting eagerness for the catastrophe, that so much enhance the interest of a well-written novel. The author has displayed consummate skill, when in the Count of Procida he created a hero, still to leave him a man. Considered as a human agent, he is no impossible being, no monster of perfection with a great deal more of virtue, valour, and beauty than he at all knows what to do with. On the contrary, he is mirrored in truth, and consequently all his fellow-mortals have with him a real sympathy. Of the heroine, Isidora, we cannot speak too highly. We will not extract, but we request the reader to dwell with delight, and luxuriously to linger over the description which the author has given of her personal beauty. Perhaps in this he has a little exceeded the limits which even nature herself is forced to put to loveliness, but this must be forgiven him on account of the poetry with which it is con-

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veyed. In conformity with the female character, her conduct throughout is more passive than that of the count's, yet dignified in its quiet resistance to misery, and in every situation chaste, noble, and holy. It is one of those portraitures that elevate the human heart, and make us more fast in our faith in the grandest and most important attributes of immortality. There are many historical characters which play prominent parts in this interesting novel. They do not present themselves to us as passing phantoms, they are necessary to the action of the piece; almost all of the incidents depend upon them, and they all stand before us in their real historical identity. The emperor Charles V. is a brilliant, and at the same time a truthful portrait. He seems to have stepped forth the living monarch from the ancient halls of history, to enact his dignified part in this clever novel. The great pirate monarch, Barbarossa, also has an important rôle given to him. He is very faithfully represented, and makes really a very amiable Turk, all things being duly considered. There is a rogue in the plot of course, for how can anything evil, or good either, be brought about without the intervention of a rogue? But this rogue is an exquisite one, and quite original. Notwithstanding his deep villany he is a droll dog, and, kept at a proper distance from your purse or your throat, a most pleasant fellow with whom to spend a jovial hour. But we have not sufficient space wherewith to enumerate, much less to comment upon, all the *dramatis personæ* who play their parts so admirably through these three volumes. Not one of them turns out to be a failure. We trust that this successful romance will revive the public predilection for those stories in which fiction assists to make fact so agreeable and so impressive. This is truly an historical novel, and certainly the best that has, for a considerable period, appeared. There will be no need for us to recommend it immediately it becomes known—it is of that sturdy nature that it may despise ephemeral criticism, and will outlive it.

We extract the following specimen of the author's powers of description.

“ At daybreak, loud cries of joy and exultation uprose from the crew. Gonsalvo stood up and saw that they were bearing down upon the compact fleet of Barbarossa, which, having relinquished the siege of Pozzuoli, was sailing back triumphantly towards Tunis. The clangour and the clash of barbaric music rent the air; hexagonal banners floated from every mast—the blood-red flag bearing the arm and scimitar of the corsairs; the blue flag of Algiers with the same ominous bearing; the stripes, argent and gules, of the kingdom of Tunis; all intermingled their folds; while from the maintop streamed out Mahomet's dreaded crescents, declaring that the standards of Barbarossa's own powerful kingdoms were yet supported by the might of the Magnificent Soleyman. In pomp and in triumph, the single vessel rejoined the fleet. Signals were exchanged between the admiral's galley and the new-comer, to ascertain, no doubt, the success of the expedition; and then, with a favouring breeze, the whole squadron proceeded on its voyage towards the coast of Africa.

“ The barren mountains and the fertile plains of Tunis, the lofty palm trees, the flat-terraced houses, soon met the sight of the joyous Corsairs. They steered under the frowning batteries of the fort of Goletta, bristled with three hundred cannons of brass, which loudly saluted the dreaded sovereign, and soon cast anchor in the tranquil waters of the port.

"Then began all that scene of confusion which ever greets the arrival of a ship of war in a friendly port. Then did the Corsairs begin to exhibit and to boast of their plunder; then were their captives—collected from all the shores of Italy, and considered the most valuable of their acquisitions, either for the ransom which would be paid for them or for their own forced labour—ostentatiously hurried on shore and conveyed in chains to the bagnio, until they should be allotted to different masters. Then was a litter with curtains of cloth of gold brought down to the water's edge for the accommodation of some female captive too beautiful or too much prized for the eyes of the multitude to be permitted to pierce the veils in which she was jealously screened as she was borne from the galley to its sheltering folds. Then came forth from his galley the majestic figure of the conquering and dreaded Barbarossa, habited in all the gorgeous magnificence of the East;—a caftan, or robe of honour, lately received from the Sultaun, upon his shoulders; his scimitar slung around his neck by a baldrick of green velvet worked with gold and studded with precious stones; the hilt of his dagger glittering with diamonds like one vast rock crystal:—his turban looped up with a band of brilliants that glowed like his own transparent seas when spangled by the horizontal rays of the rising moon.

"Amid the acclamations of thousands, the dreaded sovereign landed on the territory he had conquered; and, placing his foot in the golden stirrup of an Arab war-horse of the purest breed and most faultless make, proudly seized the brocaded silken reins that ruled a bit and curb of gold. The charger pranced with delight beneath the well-known weight of its loved rider; and exhibited its shoes of solid gold to the admiration of a multitude who prized and revered power in proportion to the magnificence with which it surrounded itself. Soon was the procession formed; and soon was it winding along the narrow streets of Tunis, from whose flatterraced houses hundreds of females, closely veiled, but glittering with the wealth of their lords, looked down with delighted curiosity, and marvelled what rare beauty might be concealed within the veils of that magnificent litter. Numerous were the reports that already spread from roof to roof:—a princess captured in Italy:—a new wife for the sovereign:—a favourite slave:—or a present for the great Soleyman; these, and a thousand other accounts, were circulated with rapidity and vouched for with equal earnestness; until the procession, the litter, the sovereign, the slaves, and the troops, were lost sight of within the lofty walls of the seraglio."

Letters from Abroad to Kindred at Home. By MISS SEDGWICK, author of "Hope Leslie," "Poor Rich Man," &c. &c.

This work will be read in England with a great deal of curiosity, and probably much read. As a literary display, certainly, it is not of a very high order, yet has it about it a heartiness, truthfulness, and we may add, a raciness, that make it stand apart from and superior to the host of writers of travels, who have flooded the press with their inanities. There are parts of these letters that really remind us of the childish simplicity of the savage witnessing, for the first time, the effects of civilization. That there may be wisdom in this we doubt not, yet the expressions of surprise that sometimes burst from this talented lady, at things of the most ordinary occurrence in the old world, is sometimes very amusing, or, if she like the phrase bet-

ter, "quite refreshing." We thank her much for much that she has said, but we are actually grateful for the much that she has omitted, and that gratitude would have been wonderfully increased had she omitted still more—say the half, or even three-fourths, of the "tattle of her whole," as financier Hume hath it. Those gracious acts of omission for which we should have been so delighted, are the numerous echoes of the guide-books, in language certainly neither weak nor inelegant, guide-book echoes still, with which her two volumes abound. To speak a little more in detail. This lady, our authoress, arrives from the United States at Portsmouth, receives many civilities which she did not expect, and almost immediately visits the Isle of Wight. Here her every step is marked by one, two, or three notes of admiration. And yet, she is continually on her guard not to express too much. When her heart is swollen with joy and admiration at all she beholds, she endeavours to crush their amiable sentiments by some awkward reference to her own country. Her patriotism is ever travelling back to New York for a damper to clap upon her philanthropy. She receives attentions from Captain Basil Hall, and she is amazed—amazed that a man who told the truth, and perhaps something more of her country, should be a perfect gentleman in his own. At first, everything with her is *couleur de rose*, and in this frame of mind she reaches London. The brilliancy of the tints that had hitherto surrounded her begin to fade,—shades of disappointment occasionally cross her, and, at last, she begins to blame with the bitterness of truth, than which what is more bitter? She sees that the owners of pomp are not happy, and that the revellers in luxury are common, sated, and too often wretched animals, and that to produce the magnificence of a capital, millions are sacrificed, all over the country, on the altars of every conceivable misery. In those parts of her narrative in which she most condemns, she does us most justice. She is always most amusingly in the wrong when she awkwardly attempts to praise us, and essays to compare us with her countrymen. Compare us with the Americans! In the good, in the bad, nay, in all things, how much are we dissimilar! She cannot philosophize. She is much too bigoted a republican to be able to comprehend either the advantages or the defects of our social state; and yet, though she sees like one afflicted with a mental ophthalmia, and reasons upon what she sees like one in a go-cart, as she honestly gives us her impressions, her statements must have a certain value here, and will be looked upon as oracles of wisdom on the other side of the Atlantic. The following extract is a fair sample of the whole:

"We went once to the Italian opera, and sat in the pit. The intermixture of gaily-dressed ladies with men in the pit gives it a civilised and lively aspect; it is something like turning a forest into a flower-garden. The pit of the opera is filled with people of respectable condition, as you may suppose from the cost of any box large enough for five or six people being seven or eight guineas. We paid two dollars for a seat. Mr. — was with us, expounding to us, and enjoying, as none but those who have the genius to the fingers' ends that makes the artist, can enjoy. The people who have the reputation of being the first singers in the world sang: Grisi, the young Garcia, Persiani, Lablache, Tam-

burini, and a very interesting young man, the son of an Italian marquis, whose *nom-de-guerre* is Mario. The little queen was in her box behind a curtain, as carefully hidden from her people as an oriental monarch; not from any oriental ideas of the sacredness of her person, but that she may cast off her royal dignity, and have the privilege of enjoying unobserved, as we humble people do. No chariness of her countenance could make her 'like the robe pontifical, ne'er seen but wondered at.' She is a plain little body enough, as we saw when she protruded her head to bow to the high people in the box next to her: the queen-dowager, the Princess Esterhazy, and so on. Ordinary is the word for her; you would not notice her among a hundred others in our village church. Just now she is suffering for the tragedy of Lady Flora, and fears are entertained, whenever she appears, that there will be voices to cry out, '*Where is Lady Flora?*' a sound that must pierce the poor young thing's heart. Ah! she has come to the throne when royalty pays quite too dear for its whistle!"

Here is the republican evident throughout. We do not think that even a bitter chartist amongst us could speak so *coolly* disrespectfully of the sovereign. He would have done her the honour to have abused her heartily, if he wished to speak ill of her at all. And the winding up about the whistle at the end of it is "all hog" yankee. Are we displeased with this? O no! not in this lady, certainly. Let us go on a little further with this extract:

"We had the ballet *La Gitana* after the singing—and Taglioni. No praise of her grace is exaggerated. There is music in every movement of her arms; and if she would restrict herself within the limits of decency, there could not be a more exquisite spectacle of its kind than her dancing. I would give in to the ravings of her admirers, and allow that her grace is God's beautiful gift, and that fitting it is it should be so used. But could not this grace be equally demonstrated with a skirt a few inches longer and rather less transparent? To my crude notions her positions are often disgusting; and when she raised her leg to a right angle with her body, I could have exclaimed, as Carlyle did, '*Merciful Heaven! where will it end?*'"

We had the republican before speaking out, now we have the puritan. All this is matter of taste; but for ourselves, we find only that which we look for in these exhibitions, the poetry of motion, and the personation of harmony—if others can discover more, be the skirts short or long, opaque or transparent, they are either much better or much worse than ourselves. Let it be understood that we use the word puritan in no invidious sense; indeed we need not scruple at it, as Miss Sedgwick repeatedly calls herself one, and glories in the calling. After this we have a great deal of the guide-book echoes. She thus winds up her description of Windsor.

"We spent some hours in going through the magnificent apartments of the palace, looking at the pictures, the Gobelin tapestry, &c. &c. The quaint, curious banqueting-room of the knights of the Garter, with their insignia, pleased me best. Vacant places are left for future knights; but how much longer an institution will last that is a part of a worn-out machine, is a question which your children, dear C., may live to see solved.

"We had enough of the enjoying spirit of children to be delighted, and felt much in the humour of the honest man who said to Prince Esterhazy,

when he was blazing in diamonds, 'Thank you for your diamonds.' 'Why do you thank me?' naturally asked the prince. 'You have the trouble of them, and I the pleasure of looking at them.' Wise and happy man! He solved a puzzling problem. In truth, the monarch has not the pleasure of property in Windsor Castle that almost every American citizen has in the roof that shelters him. 'I congratulate your majesty on the possession of so beautiful a palace,' said some foreign prince to whom Victoria was showing it. 'It is not mine, but the country's,' she replied. And so it is, and all within it. She may not give away a picture, or even a footstool."

All through this we see the covert spleen against monarchy, but the extract is remarkable for the palming of the old story, old as the hills, about the diamonds upon Esterhazy. This lady must imagine we of the old world to be remarkably young. But we fear that we are growing too captious; we are certain that we are dwelling too much upon detail. In many other things there is a great deal in which we could inform ourselves by the remarks of this talented American, and that upon our spirit of caste especially. This is the besetting sin of England, and yet we continue to hug it as a virtue. But our authoress did not confine her travels to England. She made what was once called the grand tour of Europe. She seems to prefer the German personal character to all others, and most to hate their absolute political institutions. We go with her, heart and soul, in her hatred to despotism; and her contempt of the rulers of some of the petty states of Europe does her infinite honour. Certainly, in these her volumes, she has done her best to get them (the volumes) excluded from those parts, where, if admitted, they would do most good. She is honest, which is a great thing in a writer, and for which we readily pardon her sins of tediousness. She is a patriot, and that is much more than sufficient to make us overlook her frequent outbursts of vanity—especially as the vanity is more national than individual. Altogether, we are glad that we have made this lady's acquaintance, and we think our readers will be glad to do so too.

Tom Bowling; a Tale of the Sea. By Capt. FREDERICK CHAMIER, R.N., Author of the "Life of a Sailor," "The Spitfire," "Jack Adams," &c. &c. 3 Vols.

We have watched Captain Chamier's literary course with no little anxiety, for we always believed that from his talents he was one from whom not only good but great things might be expected; and yet no one has proved more unequal than he, in the various publications with which he has favoured the world. We will not be so invidious as to instance those works in which he has displayed the depths to which he can sink, but gladly turn to the novel before us, as an instance of the degree of excellence to which he can attain. *Tom Bowling* is the best of his published works. It is not only comparatively good, but positively a superior production. It has sentiment, and that in the right direction. In its execution it has less of the heavy fist of the captain of the man-of-war discernible than most of the naval novels from similar sources. The story is thrown off in a

workmanlike, even in an artistical manner. We can assure all lovers of excitement that it is very very deeply interesting. Had not the gallant commander fallen into some of the worst common-places of prejudice, he might have made his tale not only effective but most powerful. What class of readers did he wish to conciliate when he made his hero turn out at last a shoot from the aristocracy? This pouring out of noble blood by the bucket-fulls is a feat so easy and a feat become so nauseous by repetition. It is the resource of mediocrity. Tom Bowling should have stood only by the strength of his well-drawn and noble character, and not have been bolstered up and damaged by turning out, after all, the son of a lord. But we find that we are carping where we had intended to commend; but we could not help it, for Captain Chamier has done much to destroy the Tom Bowling of England's imagination, the pride and darling of his crew. But what is this to the novel reader? Sir Thomas Bowling will serve his purpose much better. He fights and makes love with equal *éclat*. He is a hero every inch of him. With the perfumed waters of refinement he soon washes off the tar from his hands, and, almost at the outset, he stands the *beau idéal* of a man-of-war's captain. Our author has been hard upon the foremast man. Sir Thomas Bowling has filched from fore-castle Jack his own *Black-eyed Susan*, and made a lady of her. She is, however, an excellent heroine in his hands, but we heartily wish that he had called her by some other name. This sweeping away of all our long-cherished idealities is cruel. It is lucky that he did not fall foul of Wapping Old Stairs, as no doubt it would have been re-modelled upon more genteel principles, and re-named the "Mariner's Ascent," "The Steps of Debarkation," or something equally grandiloquent. But, cavil as we may, these volumes are calculated to please a numerous class of readers, and are made to sell—that best test of an author's success. The scenes described are full of vitality, of eager, dashing enterprize, and actually glow with the vividness of imagination. All that most rouses the heart of man, or touches the soul of woman, assists in making the fiction of the most pungent description. On the one hand, we have the storm, the battle, the duel and the pestilence, on the other, man's faith repaid by woman's love, and the trusting tenderness of the female bosom dignified by virtue and embellished by graces scarcely human. What we most have to complain of is, that Tom Bowling is written with a greater anxiety to obtain success than to deserve it. It is levelled at the largest, and therefore not the most discriminating class of readers,—a very good thing for the bookseller and for the temporary fame of the author; but this only should not be the end of writing, nor the sole ambition of a noble-minded writer. The drift, the moral of the story, is all cast in the wrong direction. Not one man in a million is ever made a post-captain from before the mast. It is futile to hold out such promotion, or the chances of it, to the seaman as an incentive to good conduct. As Mr. Howard has done in his "Jack Ashore," all writers of nautical fictions should endeavour to reconcile the sailor to his lot—more than this, to make him appreciate, to love and to honour it. His mind should not be unsettled by a vain ambition, stars and titles should not be made to flit before his

eyes, but he should be taught to respect his station, and not be tempted to find disappointment and misery in hankering after the impossible. But had Tom Bowling lived and died the contented, honest, and natural Tom Bowling of our associations, how much dramatic effect would have been lost, but what a sterling moral would have been gained! With very much respect for Captain Chamier, we think that it requires a mind of a higher order, and more mental courage than he possesses, to do this, and to do it well. Neither his bookseller nor the readers of the circulating libraries would like it. Grandeur of conduct must be associated with the external gauds of rank and fortune, to be at all appreciated by common minds, and but few would have sympathized with the hero who only lived and died a common sailor. But in thus giving our candid opinion, and in yearning after that perfection which neither this author, nor perhaps any other save one, can yield us, we do not mean to subtract an iota from the praise which we have most cheerfully awarded, that this is an excellent naval novel, and proves that Captain Chamier is still in the full vigour of his faculties. Extracts we shall not give here; they would afford but little satisfaction to our readers, unprepared as they must be by that which precedes them. The outline of the story we shall also omit, and content ourselves by designating it as simple, natural, and very effective, though by no means original. We shall conclude by assuring all novel readers, that, in these volumes, there is a great treat reserved for them, and the graver portion of the public cannot peruse them without considerable advantage and very much amusement.

On Gout; its Cause, Nature, and Treatment.. By JOHN PARKIN. Honorary and Corresponding Fellow to all the Royal Academies and Societies in Europe, (if there be any value in *et ceteras*.) Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, &c. &c. &c.

John Parkin says that "gout is produced by the presence of some morbid matter in the blood." This proposition we neither assent to nor deny; let the faculty agree upon it among themselves, and then it will be time enough to express an opinion—we need not be in any hurry therefore. It is the remedies with which we are most concerned, but our concern becomes truly great, when we find that the number of those remedies is immense—nearly the whole of the *materia medica* being comprised in the list. Alas, this apparent wealth hides the greatest poverty—for it is a fact, that the general opinion which prevails among medical men is, that there is no remedy at all—the *gout is incurable*. A very comfortable confession this, truly. But let us not despair; Mr. Parkin lives, or if he be dead now, which we hope is not the case, he has lived to some purpose, for he has discovered a specific; and that is *carbonic acid gas*. Colchicum, and all the other usual administratives, Mr. Parkin affirms, either do not remove the gout at all, or removing it, leave a worse disorder in its place. Now for a case.

"It was that of a poor Irishwoman, named Mary Murphy, then residing in Oxford Buildings, Oxford Street, who was attacked with disease

in 1832—shortly after the appearance of the epidemic cholera in this country. This individual (who was a public patient of my friend Mr. Bloxam, and whom I attended during his absence from town) had been in the habit of going into the infirmary in Mount Street on previous occasions; but so severe were the attacks, generally lasting from three to four months, that the authorities refused to admit her; and hence she was obliged to apply to the district surgeon.

“When I saw her, the inflammation, which had first attacked the joints of the great toe, had already spread to the ancles, the knees, the joints of the hand, and the elbows—and so great were her sufferings that she immediately requested, on my visiting her, to have a dose of laudanum; adding that this was the only motive she had in sending for medical aid, as she knew it was out of my power to effect any good, or do more than soothe the pain. Having, however, before this administered carbonic acid in a few cases, and being convinced of its utility, I ordered this medicine instead of the laudanum, much to the annoyance of my patient, who could hardly be persuaded to give it a trial, and only in consequence of my telling her that it was a better anodyne than laudanum, and that it would assuage the pain more effectually. This proved to be the case so soon, that, on my next visit, she begged as earnestly for the new anodyne as she had before done for the old; and, as her request was in this case readily granted, she continued to take the medicine regularly until the termination of the attack, which was in about *three weeks*—notwithstanding that she had supposed, from the number of joints affected, that this attack would have been the longest and the most severe of any she had experienced.”

The pith and substance of this book may be contained in these words—in all gouty cases administer “carbonic acid gas.” There is not one word on the manner, quantity, or the vehicle which is to make this remedy effective. Therefore the gouty must go to the doctor himself for satisfaction on this head. Now, what we advise is this,—the sufferers should read this work, and if they see in its reasoning any prospect of relief, they should hand it over to their medical adviser and friend, and gain his candid opinion on the subject, if it could be obtained fairly from one practitioner of another. If both the patient and the doctor feel inclined to give the gas a trial, we suppose the next step must be to go to Mr. Hatchard’s, bookseller, Piccadilly, and there learn the address of the author; and applying to him, listen to what he has to say on this new antidote, and, if convinced of its power, trust to him and to it. Experience only can prove its value. The cases cited in this treatise are altogether too few, and the medicine has not been long enough under trial, for any one but Mr. Parkin himself to express a decided opinion upon it. Enough, however, has been stated to make it a duty on the profession either to confirm or refute our author. For the rest, his book is very well written as to its arrangement and its style of composition.

The Storm, and other Poems. By FRANCIS BENNOCH.

Mediocrity, this detestable mediocrity, how intensely do we hate it! Had Mr. Francis Bennoch written his poems like a fool or a dunce—had he been admirably amusing, or risibly ridiculous—we

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could much better have tolerated him than under his present flat and insipid level of ornamented common place. We cannot laugh at him—indeed we are forced to commend him a little for harmonious verse, nicely-balanced sentences, and for the most approved of, yet the most used, virtuous sentiments. This harping on the eternal string of a decent morality; this monotonous call upon us to do good and to avoid evil; these self-evident and never-doubted truths; are as wearisome as would be the versifying of the Rule of Three, and actually does take away the edge of our natural wish of well-doing by the operation of dulness;—and in rhyme too—there, there lies the aggravation. But our readers may ask, is there in a volume ostentatiously dedicated to Wordsworth, nothing to recommend it?—no exhibition of talent—no thought? Yes; here is one—at least the author calls it so himself.

“A THOUGHT.

“OUR lives like waves in quick succession rise,
And heave, and roll, and break upon the shore;
Youth follows childhood, manhood follows youth,
Old age succeeds, then death, and all is o’er!

Or like the peals of some far-distant bell,
Knell follows knell, and chime succeeds to chime,
Death follows life—life ever springs from death:
Thus endlessly revolves the chain of Time!”

“Here be truths!” as Shakspeare’s clown says grandiloquently; but how miserably often we have heard them before! Let us try a song, and see if we succeed better.

“SONG.

“THE setting sun throws o’er the sea
A glorious golden chain,
Uniting lands in bonds of love,
To war no more again:
Or is’t a cheering smile from Heaven,
Borne o’er the glowing tide,
To bless two fondly-loving hearts
Now beating side by side?

I am a child of Scotland’s wild
And rugged mountains blue;
Of England’s wide and fertile plains,
The fairest child are you.
By Heaven’s example thus we join
In love our father-lands;
No friend is he to thee or me
Who’d burst the holy bands.

But what are country, friends, or home,
Since, wheresoe’er we move,
Our two fond hearts will there create
A world of joyous love?
Thy beaming eye shall be its light,
Thy voice its melody;
Thy breath as sweet as new-mown hay
Its atmosphere shall be.”

Let the reader remark the stern independence of each sentence, its republican disdain of any connexion in sense of one verse with another, and then mark the rationality of throwing a sun-beam "o'er the sea," and "o'er the glowing tide, to bless two fondly-loving hearts now sitting side by side." That same sun-beam must have journeyed very far to very little purpose. This is the way that books of verses are now concocted, and then the over-jaded and most unjustly-abused public are stigmatized as having lost all relish for poetry. The last verses in the book are called "Stanzas to my Muse," and begin thus—

" ' Deceitful Muse—deceitful Muse,
Why turnest thou away
Thy glad'ning smiles from this poor heart,
That's loved thee night and day ?' "

In reply to this, we would counsel the complaining rhymester to let her go, and the sooner the better; and if he cannot hereafter find another less resembling in spirit skimmed-milk, to give up the pursuit altogether. If people would write something worth condemning, why there may be hope; but in mediocrity we see at once the beginning, the career, and the end, and that is—a *failure*.

Canadian Scenery Illustrated, uniform with American Scenery, Switzerland, Scotland, &c. From Drawings by W. H. BARTLETT, engraved in the first style of the Art by R. WALLIS, J. COUSEN, WILLMORE, BRANDARD, BENTLEY, RICHARDSON, &c. The literary department by N. P. WILLIS, Esq., Author of "Pencillings by the Way," "Inklings of Adventure," &c.

This beautiful periodical, so honourable to the fine arts and to literature, still maintains its high rank. The number that we have last received, is opened by an engraving by J. Cousen, and represents the junction of the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence, near Cedars, a most expansive view, and exquisitely finished. This is followed by a view of Coburg, clear, and bearing the impress of reality. It is a busy scene of town life, and is highly creditable to the artist. We have next "the Chaudière fall," near Quebec, a highly romantic delineation of rushing floods and foaming cataracts. The fourth and last is a view of Port Hope, which exhibits nothing remarkable but the skill of those employed upon it. The literary department sustains its high character, and it is done with the most exact impartiality. The following is a specimen of this author's simple yet effective style of description.

"Montreal, the chief town in this district, though not ranking as a capital, is equal to Quebec in magnitude, and superior in commercial importance. Its greatness is likely to increase, from its favourable situation, and the growing prosperity of Upper Canada, of which, as being the highest point of the St. Lawrence to which vessels of the first class can ascend, it always continues the emporium.

"The site of this town does not present those bold and grand features which distinguish the Canadian metropolis, though its beauty can scarcely

be surpassed. The river, in this finest part of its course, divides itself into two channels, inclosing an island thirty-two miles long and ten and a half broad, which forms one of the most favoured spots on earth. The soil, everywhere luxuriant, is cultivated like one great garden, to supply the inhabitants with vegetables and fruit. These last are of the finest quality, and the apples especially are said to display that superiority which so remarkably distinguishes them in the New World. Although the island possesses in general that level surface that fits it for a thorough cultivation, yet about a mile and a half north-east rises a hill, five hundred and fifty feet high, commanding a noble view over the fertile country, which is watered by the several branches and tributaries of the St. Lawrence. Its face is covered with agreeable villas, and its wooded heights form a frequent resort to pleasure parties from the city; but the intention now understood to be entertained of erecting fortifications on its summit, will, if put into execution, banish in a great measure its rural character.

"The city, built on the southern border of this fine island, is not crowded like Quebec into a limited space, which can alone be covered with streets and habitations. It has a wide level surface to extend over, so that even the older streets are of tolerable breadth, and several of them occupy its entire length. The principal one, Rue Notre Dame, considerably exceeds half a mile in extent, and contains many of the chief public buildings. There is an upper and lower town, though the difference of elevation is very slight; but the former is much the more handsome of the two. The seven suburbs are not, as in the older capital, detached and extraneous, but on the same level, and immediately adjacent. Their streets, continued in the direction of those in the body of the place, are regular, and display many handsome houses. The vicinity is adorned with beautiful villas."

When this publication is completed, it will form one of the most splendid works that the present times have produced.

The Scenery and Antiquities of Ireland.

This is by the same artists and the same author that have made the "Canadian Scenery Illustrated" so popular. It is commenced by a view of Dublin Bay, and a most magnificent display it produces; nothing is left to wish for in the execution of this splendid engraving. The Irish may well be proud of the original. The approach to Cashel from the north is very imposing in all the majesty of old Gothic architecture. The figures in the foreground of this plate are most appropriate, and very classically introduced. The view of the Head of Glenmalur, in the county Wicklow, is wild, desolate, and almost savage. We commend it highly for its Poussin-like air. The entrance doorway of Temple M'Durmot is a ruin, and a most gorgeous one. Mr. Bartlett has laboured most successfully in his very inspiring vocation, and is well supported by Mr. Willis. The following is a fair specimen of some of the most exalted of the wild Irish in Queen Elizabeth's time.

"Just opposite Westport, at the entrance to Clew Bay, lies Clare Island, the residence of the ancient chieftains of the county Mayo and its multitude of isles—Grana Uaile. One square and strong tower yet remains of her stronghold on the island shore. Of this 'heroine of the west' Mr. Otway gives the following interesting account. 'Grace

O'Mealey,' which has been corrupted into Grana Uaile, was the daughter of Breanhaun Crone O'Maille, tanist or chieftain of that district of Mayo surrounding Clew Bay, and comprising its multitude of isles. This district is still called by the old people the Uisles of O'Mealey; and its lord, owning, as he did, a great extent of coast, and governing an adventurous seafaring people, had good claim to his motto, 'TERRA MARIQUE POTENS.' Breanhaun Crone O'Maille dying early, left a son and daughter—the son but a child—the daughter, just ripening into womanhood, seemed to have a character suited to seize the reins of government, and rule over this rude and brave people. Setting aside, then, at once the laws of tanistry, that confined the rule to the nearest male of the family, she took upon her, not only the government, but the generalship of her sept, and far exceeded all her family in exploits as a sea-rover; and from her success, whether as smuggler or pirate, as the case might be, she won the name of Grace of the Heroes. Acting in this wild and able way, she soon gathered round her all the outlaws and adventurers that abounded in the islands, and from the daring strokes of policy she made, and the way in which she bent to her purpose the conflicting interests of the English government and the Irish races—she was called the Gambler. As a matter of policy, she took for her first husband O'Flaherty, Prince of Connemara; and there is reason to suppose that the gray mare proving the better horse, the castle in Lough Corrib, of whose traditional history notice has been already taken, was nearly lost to the Joyces by O'Flaherty the Cock, but was saved and kept by Grana the Hen, hence it got the name which it still keeps of Krishlane na Kirca—the *Hen's Castle*. Be this as it may, Grana's husband, the Prince of Connemara, dying soon, she was free to make another connexion, and in this also she seems to have consulted more her politics than her affections, and became the wife of Sir Richard Bourke, the M'William Eighth. Tradition hands down a singular item of the marriage contract. The marriage was to last for *certain* (what said the pope to this?) but one year; and if at the end of that period either said to the other, 'I dismiss you,' the union was dissolved. It is said, that during that year Grana took good care to put her own creatures into garrison in all M'William's eastward castles that were valuable to her, and then, one fine day, as the Lord of Mayo was coming up to the castle of Corrig-a-Howly, near Newport, Grana spied him, and cried out the dissolving words—'I dismiss you.' We are not told how M'William took the snapping of the matrimonial chain; it is likely that he was not sorry to have a safe riddance of such a virago."

The whole of this department is vivacious, and replete with the most amusing anecdote. If we were inclined to be captious, we should say that it contains too much quotation; for we like the author so much that we can hardly reconcile ourselves, in this work, to any other words than his own. We strongly recommend this work to every one who makes any pretension to taste.

Criminal Jurisprudence considered in relation to Mental Organization.
By M. B. SAMPSON.

This benevolent author is unfortunate in his title, for it is most difficult to conceive what he means by mental organization. We rather think that the word should have been "physical," in reference to matter acting upon mind. However, we leave this point to be decided

by metaphysicians; but we know that there would be but few who would accept the term "mental organization" as having any definite scientific meaning. Mr. Sampson carries his philanthropy to the criminal into injustice to society; for he would reduce most crimes to a mental alienation, and permit none to be punished with death. In our opinion, the plea of madness is already too freely admitted; and the more that it is admitted, we shall find the more madness and the more crime. In one sense, every deviation from the line of rectitude is insanity—and thus all responsibility for acts would be destroyed. Whenever a man is conscious of offence, he should be amenable to punishment. Even this rule should be extended to a man decidedly deranged. As to the abolishing the punishment of death wholly, as we know that such an abolishing is not enjoined by the law of God, so we feel assured that it would be inexpedient to do it by the laws of man. From the same source from which we derive our ten commandments, we find a limb required for a limb, and a life for a life. The idea of perpetual imprisonment as a substitute for death is illusory. Hope never dies in the human bosom. For the sake of a deadly revenge, a bad man would run all chances—and they are many—if death cut them not off speedily. Popular outbreaks, revolutions, attempts at escape from without, corruption within—all these, and many more, make against the chances of any imprisonment being perpetual. Let us do justice with mercy—but still let it be justice; for mercy, in the distempered minds of some men, would prove to be, in the end, nothing but injustice and cruelty.

Proceedings of the London Electrical Society. Edited by the SECRETARY.

We have received the report of the proceedings of the first session of this newly-formed society, and a very interesting report it is. This society has long been demanded by the progress of science, and we expect from it results of the last importance. Electricity seems to be the prime agent of the physical world, and the little that we do know of it assures us that, even in human hands, it will one day change—we had almost said the face of nature. All the papers presented in this part are deeply interesting. It is almost a duty incumbent upon every one who wishes to promote really useful knowledge, to aid this society, and to make himself acquainted with their proceedings, by purchasing their reports as soon as they appear.

Chambers' London Journal of History, Literature, Poetry, Biography, and Adventure.

We have examined the two first parts of this undertaking, and find that they have been executed in a commendable manner. There is a variety and an extensive fund of really useful information in them;

and, though we are not very friendly to cheap literature, when it is laid before us as it is in this journal, we cannot refrain from approving of the work, although we are opposed to the principle to which it owes its origin. One good feature in the work is, that it contains nothing trashy. Of its sort every article is respectable, and some of the pieces very superior. In a production so diversified as is this, and so astonishingly cheap, much originality cannot be expected, and yet there is so much given us that we must suppose that authors are now smitten so desperately with the love of notoriety, that they refuse all other reward than the pleasure of seeing themselves in print. This is the only way in which we can account for so much matter not to be despised, produced to the public in a manner which leaves nothing to be desired, for prices all but nominal. We will instance one number, the ninth, containing six articles. Firstly, there is "A Trip by the Great Western Railway," a pleasant gossiping affair, evidently original; "Mesmerism, or Animal Magnetism," well written, but leaning too much towards credulity; "British Song-birds in Cages," which would ornament any periodical; "Traits and Sketches of Irish Character," decidedly good; "The London Water Companies," containing much useful information, but too much after the manner of the puff collusive; "La Place's Cosmogony," but indifferent; "A new chapter on the Curiosities of Literature," which is a flinging of a couple of Thomas Moore's early transgressions in his face, in the shade of two very maukish poems; and, lastly, "A Sonnet to Napoleon," which is clever, but marred by an unpardonable fault, in not once having his name mentioned throughout, so that, were it not for its title, we should have to guess on, or to whom, it is addressed. Now all this is offered to the public for three halfpence. The good of the many should always be looked upon as the chief good, but we have our doubts whether ultimately this chief good will be best promoted by so profusely wasting away literature on the multitude in such comminuted streams. Not we, but futurity, must decide the question.

Digestion ; the Influence of Alcoholic Fluids on that Function ; and on the value of Health and Life ; with a Scheme for rendering the Working Classes independent of Parish Relief. By ROBERT DUNDAS THOMSON, M.D., Physician to the Blenheim Street Free Dispensary.

The title is one of great promise, but we are sorry to say that the performance which we naturally looked for in the work itself, is one that we must conscientiously state as something worse than unsatisfactory. On the influence of the alcoholic fluids, there is absolutely nothing new, but merely an exaggeration of the teetotal prejudices. Let the enthusiasts for water rave as they may, they never will convince the reflecting portion of mankind that fermented and even distilled liquors, used temperately, are not only innocuous, but also healthful, in climates of high latitudes. The second division of this pamphlet, which pretends to treat of the value of health and life, is still more vapid; and the third and last, which purports to be

a scheme to render the working classes independent of parish relief, is nothing more than a puff of the "United Kingdom Total Abstinence Life Association." We give the doctor credit for philanthropy, but certainly none at all for foresight. Were the labouring classes to save money by lives of privation and mortification, whilst their numbers are so superabounding, their employers would give them less wages, and make them fall back upon their savings, as did the farmers throw their labourers on the poor-rates; and the only effect of the author's plan becoming general, would be the reducing of all those who live by the sweat of their brow to a lower scale in social existence. Even the saving-banks are good only, because they are used by a vast minority. Had every mechanic his two or three hundred pounds hoarded up, most assuredly their masters would no longer have hesitation, on the first falling off of trade, to reduce wages. People who argue these pet schemes argue in a circle. Their plans, to be good, should be universal. Suppose we all have money lying at interest; must we not all be taxed to pay that interest? and therefore none could be the better for it but the *employés* in these affairs. As it is, the provident get their interest at the expense of the improvident; but let us all be equally provident, and then tell us who will benefit by it, with the exceptions only that we have just stated? Let us suppose that the "United Kingdom Total Abstinence Society" had every man in the united kingdom for a client. Here with one hand you injure the revenue to the tune of some millions, and with the other you seek your share of the depreciated revenue by vesting your capital in the public securities. Our commercial loss would be tremendous. Dupes and knaves rub on very amicably together, but all dupes, or all knaves, would throw everything into confusion.

The Remorse of Orestes, King of Argos, Lacedæmon, Mycenæ, and Sicyon, Son of Agamemnon.

We do not understand this work. We neither know under what head to class it, the author's intention in writing it, or the impression that he wishes to convey to his readers. It has something of the appearance of a prose epic, or rather of an episode to such a composition. There is in it but very little indeed about the remorse of Orestes, scarcely a page, for the principal part of the book is occupied in mingling the events recorded by sacred and profane history, and in anticipating discoveries, inventions, and the lessons of political economy of a thousand years beyond the epoch in which the action of the works has place. There is some merit in this small volume—the merit of eloquence, and considerable powers of description, but to what end these are exhibited we repeat that we do not know. It may be that the author is a divine, and that he wishes, by amalgamating the books of Moses with those of the Greek historians, to support the authenticity of both, or perhaps he has no higher ambition than that of attempting an experimental epic flight. The reader must judge for himself.

The History of the British Empire in India. By EDWARD THORNTON, Esq., Author of "India, its State and Prospects," &c. &c.

This promising history is publishing in parts, one or two of which we have already favourably noticed. It is now brought down to the years 1760, and is occupied by the struggles that took place in our successful attempts to expel the French from the Carnatic. We very much approve of the style of the narrative, which is at once rapid and perspicuous. It is impossible to slumber over these pages. The reader will be forcibly struck with the utter faithlessness and the inveterate duplicity of the native princes of India. With whatever blame the strict moralist may be inclined to visit our gradual usurpations, every one who thinks on the subject must plainly see that we had but one of two courses left open to us to pursue, either to abandon India altogether, or ourselves to assume the sovereign authority wherever our presence was necessary. We did the latter, and we think that we acted mercifully towards the inhabitants. This same course we must inevitably pursue with the Chinese. You never can make them sufficiently ethical to observe treaties, or ever to act with common honesty, but by the broadside and the bayonet. To return to the work before us. We were very fortunate in having wise and brave men entrusted with our interests in India, and none was more sagacious or more valiant than the renowned Colonel Clive. The following anecdote will display his promptitude and energy in moments of difficulty.

"Sir John Malcolm relates an anecdote, and he says, on good authority, which illustrates the calmness of Clive under circumstances which might have excused some degree of excitement, not less than his habit of prompt decision. On the approach of the Dutch force, Colonel Forde, desirous of being armed with adequate authority for treating as enemies a people with whom the English were ostensibly at peace, wrote a note to Clive, saying that if he had the order of council he could attack the Dutch with a fair prospect of destroying them. Clive was playing at cards when he received the communication, and without quitting the table, he wrote the following answer with a pencil:—

"Dear Forde,

"Fight them immediately; I will send you the order of council to-morrow."

"The instruction was followed, and with what success has been shown in the text."

That success was most complete. Meer Jaffier, who was then the sovereign of Bombay *under Clive*, had called in these very Dutch in order to deceive his master. Of course, when these his secret allies were defeated, he turned against them and mulcted them heavily for having invaded his dominions. Clive himself, to whom was mainly indebted our subsequent supremacy in the East, felt himself very ill used by the Directors of the East India Company. The following extract will show the relations between the Nabob and his protector.

"Immediately after the conclusion of the treaty with the Dutch, Colonel Calliaud arrived from Madras, and he was forthwith dispatched with a considerable force to Moorshedabad, where in a few days he was joined

by Clive and Colonel Forde. Both these distinguished commanders were about to quit India. Clive introduced Colonel Calliaud to the Nabob, and recommended him to his confidence; but it has been justly said that 'confidence is a plant of slow growth,' and Meer Jaffier regarded the approaching departure of Clive with much alarm. He disliked the control which Clive had exercised over him, but he felt the want of his fertile and active mind to guide him through his difficulties. These were neither few nor slight. Invasion threatened him from without, while within, an exhausted treasury, a discontented soldiery, and an oppressed people, afforded abundant grounds for apprehension. In addition to the anxiety generated by these sources of annoyance, Meer Jaffier was subjected to constant fear of the consequences which might arise from the wayward and extravagant conduct of his son Meerun. More especially did he dread that, in conformity with the many precedents which Oriental history affords, the prince might take some measures to quicken the natural course of the succession to the throne. The pride of Meer Jaffier had sometimes revolted at the interference of Clive, and circumstances had occasionally led him to cherish the thought of emancipating himself from his control; but when difficulty arose, he felt himself incompetent to meet it. The storm never failed to revive that dependence which the calm had dissipated. Weak, timid, indolent, and indecisive, Meer Jaffier looked to a stronger mind than his own for counsel, and the loss of Clive was felt by him as the removal of the main stay of his throne and safety.

"It was not by the Nabob only that Clive's departure was regarded with apprehension: many of the Company's servants augured ill of the results. The Nabob was surrounded by persons inimical to the interests of the English, and the influence of their counsel, it was feared, might shake to its foundations the fabric which the genius of Clive had raised. These views were pressed upon him with much earnestness, but his determination was taken. He was dissatisfied with the conduct of the Court of Directors, and the state of his health had long dictated retirement. After passing a few days at Moorshedabad, Clive returned to Calcutta, whence, in the month of February, he departed for England."

Abroad, many a great success has been considered nugatory, and many a glorious project defeated by the untimely interference of feather-bed advisers at home. Our commanders, in places so distant as Bombay and Calcutta, should have a discretionary power, all but unlimited. This is often plainly shown in the work before us, to which we shall return at some early opportunity.

A Cyclopædia of Commerce, Mercantile Law, Finance, and Commercial Geography. By WILLIAM WATERSTON, Accountant, Author of "A Manual of Commerce."

Utility, and that of the most extensive description, is the distinguishing quality of this work. It is published in parts, the first of which contains one hundred and twelve closely-printed pages, and has only reached to the word "Brick," taking the various subjects in alphabetical order. Consequently, this must, if completed, form a very voluminous affair, and a most satisfactory one also, if carried through with the same care and talent with which it is commenced. The manner of this Cyclopædia is best shown by an extract.

"AZORES, or WESTERN ISLANDS, are situated in the Atlantic, between lat. 37° and 40° N., and long. 25° and 32° W., about 795 miles W.

from Portugal, to which they belong. They consist of three groups, viz. 1, St Michael and St. Mary; 2, Terceira, Fayal, Pico, St. George, and Graciosa; 3, Flores and Corvo, exclusive of several islets. Pop. 205,000. The seat of government is Angra, in the island of Terceira, pop. 16,000.

"These islands are of volcanic origin, and are in general mountainous. The climate is mild and pure, the soil highly fertile—most of the islands abounding in vineyards, orange and lemon orchards, and pastures. The growth of wine is considerable: it is produced mostly in Pico, but is known as Fayal wine, from being shipped from the latter. From 8,000 to 10,000 pipes are exported in favourable seasons to America and the West Indies. The remaining exports are chiefly from St. Michaels, and consist of large quantities of fruit to Britain; and of corn and live-stock to Lisbon, Madeira, and the Canaries. The imports are, from England, cottons, woollens, hardware, earthenware, and other manufactured goods; from America, boards, staves, lumber, fish, pitch, tar; and from Portugal, tobacco, sugar, coffee, dispensations, indulgences, images of saints, and relics. The principal shipping towns are Ponta del Gado in St. Michaels, Angra in Terceira, and Fayal in the island of that name; but there is no good port, and as none of the anchorages afford shelter, ships are often obliged, by violent winds, to put to sea at a very short notice, particularly in the months from October to April. In 1833, the British shipping that entered the Azores, and the invoice value of British imports and exports were as follows; *St. Michaels*, ships entered, 305; tonnage, 21,903; imports, 56,437*l.*; exports, 100,116*l.* *Terceira*, ships entered, 59; tonnage, 5,419; imports, 18,200*l.*; exports, 12,667*l.* *Fayal*, ships entered, 32; tonnage, 3,607; imports, 8,699*l.*; exports, 7,294*l.* Total value of British imports in nine years, 1825 to 1833, 738,867*l.*; and of exports in same period, 895,785*l.* Measures, Weights, and Money, same as Portugal. (*Geo. Journal*, vol. iv. *Tables of Board of Trade*.)

"AZURE STONE, or LAPIS-LAZULI, a mineral substance of an azure blue colour. It is found massive; also, though rarely, in rhombic dodecahedrons. Sp. gr. 2.95. The massive is nearly opaque, and its blue colour is not uniform. Chief localities, China, Persia, Bucharina, and Siberia. The finer kind is prized by the lapidary, and the common is used occasionally for toys, &c. Lapis-lazuli is, however, chiefly important from its affording *ultra-marine*, a beautiful pigment, highly valued by painters."

We will give another quotation, as it may contain an acceptable piece of information to many of our readers.

"The *Clearing-House* was instituted by the London bankers about the year 1775, in order to save the time, risk, and inconvenience of sending round to each other for payment of the numerous cheques which they daily receive from their customers.

"In a large room in Lombard Street, about thirty clerks from the several London bankers take their stations, in alphabetical order, at desks placed round the room, each having a small open box by his side, and the name of the firm to which he belongs in large characters on the wall above his head. From time to time, other clerks from every house enter the room, and, passing along, drop into the box the cheques due by that firm to the house from which this distributor is sent. The clerk at the table enters the amount of the several cheques in a book previously prepared, under the name of the bank to which they are respectively due. At four o'clock all the boxes are removed, and each clerk adds up the amount of the cheques put into his box, and payable by his own to other houses. He also receives another book from his own house, containing the amounts of the cheques which their distributing clerk has put into the box of every other banker. Having compared these, he writes out the balances due to

or from his own house opposite the name of each of the other banks; and having verified this statement by a comparison with the similar list made by the clerks of those houses, he sends to his own bank the general balance resulting from this sheet, the amount of which, if it is due from that to other houses, is sent back in bank notes. At five o'clock the inspector takes his seat; when each clerk who has, upon the result of all the transactions, a balance to pay to various other houses, pays it to the inspector, who gives a ticket for the amount. The clerks of those houses to whom money is due then receive the several sums from the inspector, who takes from them a ticket for the amount. Thus the whole of these payments are made by a double system of balance, a very small amount of bank notes passing from hand to hand, and scarcely any coin.'

"It is difficult to form a satisfactory estimate of the sums which daily pass through this operation: they fluctuate from two millions to perhaps fifteen. About two millions and a half may possibly be considered as something like an average, requiring for its adjustment perhaps 200,000*l.* in bank notes, and 20*l.* in specie. By an agreement between the different bankers, all cheques which have the name of any firm written across them must pass through the clearing-house; consequently, if any such cheque should be lost, the firm on which it is drawn would refuse to pay it at the counter; a circumstance which adds greatly to the convenience of commerce. The advantage of this system is such, that two meetings a day have been recently established—one at twelve, the other at three o'clock; but the payment of balances takes place once only, at five o'clock. If all the private banks kept accounts with the Bank of England, it would be possible to carry on the whole of these transactions with a still smaller quantity of circulating medium.' (*Babbage's Economy of Machinery and Manufactures.*)

"The establishment of the clearing-house has led to new arrangements in several branches of business. The stockbrokers, for instance, now settle all their receipts and payments by cheques, to be paid through the clearing-house: the cheques which a broker draws on his banker being paid by the cheques of other brokers which he lodges to his credit. The colonial brokers and other classes have fixed days for settling their accounts, and on these days draw cheques on their bankers in the morning, and deposit others to meet them at a subsequent part of the day. The institution of the clearing-house has thus become entwined with the general commerce of the country."

After this exposition of its extent, and the high promise which the exposition gives of the future merits of this undertaking, we need say but little. It is not unlikely to become a necessary book in every counting-house in which the business is more than a retail one, and even in retail houses it will be found exceedingly useful. As a work of reference, it demands a place in the libraries of gentlemen.

Nuces Philosophicae. No. 9. By E. JOHNSON, Esq.

We are glad to find this work the subject of such general panegyric with the periodical press. We take some credit to ourselves for having been the first to recommend it to public notice. It is undoubtedly the most singular and extraordinary work which has issued from the press for years. If the doctrines which it teaches with regard to the true nature of language, of mind, of thinking, of ideas, and of human knowledge, be true—then is the whole fabric of exist-

ing opinions and human institutions shaken to its centre. We agree, however, with the *Times*, that it would be unfair, and indeed impossible, to pronounce a definite judgment on the truth or fallacy of Mr. Johnson's philosophy, ranging as it does over the wide fields both of moral, political, and metaphysical science, until the work wherein it is promulgated shall have been completed. Of the manner of its execution, however, as far as it has yet gone, we are competent to speak.

The very tone and spirit and confident energy with which the author handles his subject, while it imparts a vivacity and raciness to the arguments, is in itself, in some sort, an argument in his favour. With the lavish prodigality of a man who feels his resources to be exhaustless, he heaps proof upon proof, and illustration upon illustration, which fall upon the reader's mind like the reiterated blows of a hammer. Careless of his style, even to contempt—and sneering perpetually at those who mistake the “fustian” of words for the “philosophy of things,” he has nevertheless a mastery of language, and a felicitous and copious variety of expression peculiarly his own. He has all Cobbett's vigorous simplicity without his coarseness.

With an eye for the truth which nothing can blind, and a logical acuteness which nothing can mystify, he looks at once into the core of the question; and, throwing aside the husk and the shell, with a triumphant sneer bids the reader behold the rottenness within.

His account of mind, of thinking, of ideas, of will, of reason, of remembering, of knowing, of time, of being, of existence, of substance, of power, of quality, about which so much has been said and so little understood, is so exceedingly simple and natural, and so plainly intelligible,—and he elucidates his positions with such happy and familiar illustrations, and overturns opposing preconceived opinions with so much energy of argument—as almost to compel conviction without examination. With regard to these subjects he has certainly divested metaphysics of all difficulty and all mystery, and brought it within the compass of a child's capacity.

With respect to the higher matters of political and moral philosophy, we have not yet an opportunity of judging. But if Mr. Johnson can reduce these to the same simplicity to which he has brought metaphysics, he will indeed have rendered his country a greater service than if he had, to use his own words, “conquered a continent, and filled her treasury with its spoils.”

The chief fault in his style is the too great profusion of illustration, and too frequent repetition of the same argument on different occasions. Conscious of the novelty of his arguments to most readers, and of the host of prejudices which they have to confront, in his earnestness to make himself clearly understood, he has sometimes weakened and obscured his position by the very means which he has taken to illustrate and strengthen them.

With this immaterial exception, we know of nothing to qualify our opinion that the work is a work of great talent and more than common importance, and one which claims, and we doubt not will command, more than common attention.

The Poet ; or, the Invocations, Lamentations, Warnings, Criticisms, Thoughts, and Ravings, of A MADMAN.

From this singular title the reader may well expect a singular work—even a wild one ; nor will they be deceived. The author of this poem arrogates to himself the distinction of madness, a poetic furor ; and though his madness is most musical, there will be found wonderful method in it. A description of this poem would be impossible ; it embraces almost everything that just now interests the world. However, its predominant vein is satire—well-handled, cutting satire. Let not those who peruse it be startled at a few inaccuracies of rhyme, an unusual boldness of metaphor, or at a mysterious veiling of the sense, for all these are parts of the arrangement, for the author claims the privilege of speaking like “ a chartered libertine,” in order the more effectually to drive fully home the home truths with which his verses abound. An extract would be an injustice to the author. We must first be imbued with the reckless and yet pleasing spirit that pervades the whole, before we can fully relish the details. In conclusion, we conscientiously state, that this is a most uncommon production, inspired by no common mind, and thrown off in no common manner.

Speech for the Defendant on the Prosecution of the Queen v. Moxon, for the publication of Shelley's Works. Delivered in the Court of Queen's Bench, June 23, 1841, and revised by T. N. TALFOURD, Serejant-at-Law.

This oration deserves the serious attention of all classes of thinkers. It is, as a composition, of the highest order, but that is the very least of its merits. It teaches that noblest of human lessons, that we should always put the best construction on recorded opinions, and hesitate to condemn for parts, when we have not fully considered, or do not thoroughly understand, the whole. Such trials, and such speeches as these, accompanied by the sound and liberal remarks of the learned judge who presided, must do the world vast service. Errors of faith should not be persecuted but refuted. If they be promulgated in disgusting and blasphemous language, even then we think that with silent contempt only should they be met. Persecution is sure to produce proselytes, even to the most absurd dogmas, and there is nothing so foolish that some men will not believe, always provided other men will be so unwise as to create martyrs.

The Pictorial History of England, being a History of the People as well as a History of the Kingdom. Illustrated with many hundred woodcuts.

This work continues in its usual strain, and maintains its well-deserved reputation. It has reached its fifty-and-fourth part, and will, therefore, constitute a work of considerable magnitude. This last division is occupied principally with the progress of the national in-

dustry during the reign of the third George, and is therefore that which the title indicates, "a History of the People, as well as a History of the Kingdom." This section will be read by the philanthropist with much pleasure. It displays, to great advantage, the irrepressible energy of the English character, for neither the insanity of wars almost general, nor the shocks and tumult of inland distress, could prevent our making vast progress in everything connected with the arts and sciences. It was at this period that Sir Robert Peel's grandfather first laid, by his industry and his inventive powers, the foundation of a family, which in all probability will, in one of its descendants, rule the destinies of this vast empire. May the future prime minister never forget what himself and his connexions owe to trade and commerce, and when admitted into the coroneted order of the aristocracy, never desert the best interests of his country, those of our manufactures.

Guillemette le Delanaise, or the Three Proofs of Love. A Provençal Romance. By the Author of "the Sea Walk."

A clever trifle this, of some three hundred lines, bearing the impress of a good deal of talent of a peculiar kind. We cannot say much for the point of the story. It is but little creditable to the fair sex, and is merely this; the lady with this pretty name, Guillemette la Delanaise, is forced to give some token of preference to one of three suitors. They assemble. She ogles the first desperately, squeezes the hand of the second tenderly, and treads upon the cornless toe of the third vigorously; and thus leaves the matter undecided. One thing, however, she completely decided, that the fair Guillemette was a rank coquette, and perhaps wanted all three. Let this author attempt something beyond such trivialities, and we prophesy for him success.

London. Part V.

Knight's London continues to attract much of the public attention. The present part treats of Crosby Place, Whitehall, and Ben Jonson's London, that is to say, London as it is shown in this dramatist's works. The illustrations are very good, and the whole is very amusing, whilst it is replete with useful information. The method adopted is very discursive, and it may be extended, after it, to any *ad libitum* number of volumes.

The New Sporting Magazine. Under the patronage of his Royal Highness Prince Albert.

The eighth number, for August, of this periodical is one of great and varied merit. Nimrod, in his "Life of a Sportsman," shows himself more *au fait* at matters of this description than any other writer liv-

ing. His hero is now revelling in the delights of a college life. There is, also, a very valuable article by George Tattersall, surveyor, on Sporting Architecture, which is well illustrated by five engravings by the author. "The Sports of the Sea" are humorous, and well describe the wholesale way of naval poaching. Indeed, all the other contributions are, in their various styles, excellent, and this magazine contains all that can be expected from a publication of this description, and a very great deal more. It is everywhere well spoken of.

The Illustrated Shakspeare, Revised from the Best Authorities; with Annotations and Introductory Remarks on the Plays, by many distinguished Writers. Illustrated with nearly one Thousand Engravings on Wood, from Designs by KENNY MEADOWS, engraved by ORRIN SMITH.

The work justifies the promise of the title, and that is doing a great deal. We have received the twenty-and-sixth part, which is occupied by the Winter's Tale. It is very well illustrated indeed, and speaks volumes for the imaginative powers of Mr. Meadows. All the accessories of this edition are excellent, and we doubt not that when it is completed it will become a favourite one, and some ten or twenty years hence double its present value in the market.

The Pictorial Edition of Shakspeare.

This is a worthy rival of the former, which we have noticed above. They emulate each other, and we hardly know to which to give the preference. The present edition affects to be, and really is, more learned and *recherché*, and contains much more letter-press. The introductory notice to Julius Cæsar, the play given us in this part, is well written and very appropriate. All the illustrations are authentic portraits, or approximations to them, so far as history and conjecture drawn from good sources can make them. It is a publication of merit.

Shaksperiana. A Catalogue of the Early Editions of Shakspeare's Plays, and of the Commentaries and other Publications illustrative of his Works. By JAMES ORCHARD HALLIWELL, Esq., F.R.S., F.S.A., &c. &c. &c.

Still upon Shakspeare. All these are but proofs that his fame is immortal. This is an important document, the accuracy of which we doubt not, and its author is entitled to the thanks of all literary men. We think this little book should be the constant companion to every complete set of our bard's works. The number of editions that have appeared is really surprising, and the commentaries do not halt behind them. The arrangement of this catalogue is excellent, and it forms a key to every difficulty and doubt that may arise on the text of our great poet and dramatist.

Dictionary of the Art of Printing. By WILLIAM SAVAGE, "author of *Practical Hints on Decorative Printing,*" &c.

We have before had the pleasure of noticing this very able work as it has proceeded, and, now that it is approaching its completion, would again embrace the opportunity of strongly recommending it to the attention of our readers. Works of this character are valuable when merely judiciously compiled; but Mr. Savage is so intimately acquainted with all the details of the art, as to give to his multifarious statements the stamp of authenticity. We can scarcely conceive that any printing establishment could be considered complete, in which Mr. Savage's valuable dictionary of the art of printing should be found wanting.

Master Humphrey's Clock. By Boz. With illustrations by G. CATTERMOLE and H. K. BROWNE.

Barnaby Rudge is still occupying the public attention, and increases in excitement as his adventures draw towards a conclusion. The poor but most interesting idiot was, in the last number which we received, deeply involved in Lord George Gordon's riots, and is discovered in scenes which make his every act impressive. The violence and the brutish sensuality of the many-headed mob are well described; and the manifold variations of villany seem, to Boz's imagination, to be inexhaustible. We will, however, suspend our final judgment upon this tale until we see it concluded; and wishing its highly-talented author health and good spirits to finish this and many other stories of a similar nature, we shall wait the termination of Rudge, and the commencement of the next, with a great deal of patience, and still more confidence.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

- Barber's Isle of Wight, royal 8vo. 10s. 6d. cloth, 21s. ditto gilt, India Proofs.
 Hooker's Icones Plantarum, Vol. IV. 8vo. 28s.
 Stephen's (J. L.) Incidents of Travel in Central America, 2 vols. 8vo. 52s.
 Guy Fawkes. By W. Harrison Ainsworth. 3 vols. post 8vo. 31s. 6d.
 The Lady of the Manor. By Mrs. Sherwood. Vol. II. 12mo. 5s.
 McCash's Medical Advice to the India Stranger, post 8vo. 5s. 6d.
 Isidora, or the Adventures of a Neapolitan, 3 vols. post 8vo. 31s. 6d.
 The Life, Times, &c. of the Rev. John Campbell. By the Rev. Robert Philip, post 8vo. 10s.
 Gideon Giles, the Roper. By Thomas Miller. 8vo. 13s.
 Spencer's (the Right Hon. William) Poems, &c. royal 12mo. 7s. 6d.
 Alice Russell, and other Tales, post 8vo. 10s. 6d.
 New Library of Useful Knowledge: Geology, and Physiology of Health. 12mo. 6d. each.
 Reichard's France. 12mo. (large and small paper,) 10s. 6d.
 Corner's Turkey and the Ottoman Empire. 12mo. 3s. 6d.
 The Weather Book, Three Hundred Plain Rules for Telling the Weather. 32mo. 1s.
 Pictorial History of England. By the Rev. N. Meeres. 12mo. 3s.

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- Job Abbot, or Reasons for abandoning Trinitarian, Arian, and Unitarian Doctrines. 12mo. 4s. 6d.
- An Author's Mind, the Book of Title-Pages. Edited by M. F. Tupper, Esq. M.A. Post 8vo. 10s. 6d.
- South African Sketches. By Captain H. Butler. Imperial 4to. 31s. 6d.
- Sturmer, a Tale of Mesmerism. By J. F. Romer. 3 vols. post 8vo. 31s. 6d.
- The Pic-nic Papers. Edited by "Boz." Illustrations by George Cruikshank. 3 vols. post 8vo. 31s. 6d.
- Chronicles of Crime. By Camden Pelham. 2 vols. 8vo. 28s.
- George Julian, the Prince. 8vo. 10s.
- Ince's Outlines of English History. 18mo. 1s.
- The Critic in Parliament and in Public since 1835. 12mo. 5s.
- Worgan's Gems of Sacred Melody. 1 vol. royal 8vo. 15s.
- Parley's Tales of the World. 18mo. 6s. 6d.
- Conversations of James Northcote, R. A. By William Hazlitt. Post 8vo. 4s.
- Adolphus's (John) History of the Reign of George the Third. Vol. IV. 8vo. 14s.
- An Essay on the Government of Dependencies. By G. C. Lewis, Esq. 8vo. 12s.
- History of the Western Empire. By Sir Robert Comyn. 2 vols. demy 8vo. 30s.
- Hand-Book for Travellers: Birmingham and London and Grand Junction Railways. 18mo. plain, 3s. 6d.; coloured, 4s. 6d.
- Moore's Poetical Works, Vol. X. 12mo. 5s.
- Emerson's Essays, with Preface, by Carlyle. 12mo. 10s.
- Sir W. Scott's Tales of a Grandfather. 8vo. 12s.
- Sir W. Scott's Prose Works, Vol. III. "Tales of a Grandfather." 8vo. 12s. Vol. I. 8vo. 20s.
- Waverley Novels, Vol. I. 8vo. 20s.
- Hurwitz's Hebrew Grammar. New edit. 8vo. 17s.
- Turner's Chemistry, "The Oily Acids," forming the first supplement. 8vo. 4s.
- McCrie's (the Rev. Thomas) Sketches of Scottish Church History. 12mo. 6s. 6d.
- Anderson's (the Rev. R.) Exposition of St. John's Gospel. Vol. I. 12mo. 7s.

LITERARY NEWS—WORKS IN PROGRESS.

The new novel lately announced, entitled *Ellen Braye, or the Fortune Teller*, is just published. Report ascribes this work to the pen of a Lady of Fashion.

Mr. Macnamara's prize essay on Permanent and Universal Peace is expected to appear very speedily.

Miss Woodford has nearly ready an attractive volume, entitled *THE BOOK OF SONNETS*, from the best writers, ancient and modern. Miss Woodford dedicates it by permission, and appropriately, to the poet Wordsworth.

Mr. James's new work *RICHARD CŒUR DE LION* has not yet appeared, though it is now, we believe, almost daily expected.

Lieutenant Colonel Rowles has nearly ready a pamphlet containing some new views on the Corn Laws.

Mr. Savage has nearly completed his *DICTIONARY OF THE ART OF PRINTING*.

THE COMMERCIAL RELATIONS OF THE COUNTRY.

It is a pity, and something deeply to be lamented, that the Corn-Law question should be made a party one, and that the penalty which we must pay for the advantage of a strong conservative government will be

the perpetuation of one of the most unwise and unjust taxes that ever was imposed by power upon suffering humanity—the tax on food. The most sanguine cannot but confess that our commercial and trading prospects are most gloomy. Our report, last month, was dark, and that of the present one is still more discouraging. We have turned, by our refusal to buy their corn, most foreign nations from being customers to rivals in our manufactures. We do not know in what quarter to look for anything cheering. What says Manchester? Everything is at the lowest ebb. Short days of labour, and one half of our artisans unemployed. Our iron works give us no better account. In our carrying trade we are under-sold. In Liverpool lately there has been a little increase of profitable business. Tea is on the decline in price. Our harvest prospects fluctuate daily with the change of the weather. If the corn crops prove a failure, even the agriculturists themselves must see that a modification of their cherished corn laws must take place. Remove but this plague-spot from us, and everything else would go on healthily and well.

PRICES OF THE PUBLIC FUNDS,

On Thursday, 26th of August.

ENGLISH STOCKS.

Bank Stock, 168.—Consols for Acct. 89 three-fourths.—Three per Cent. Reduced, 89 three-fourths.—Three and a Half per Cents. Reduced, 98 seven-eighths.—Long Annuities, 1860, 12 three-fourths.—Exchequer Bills, 17s. 57s. pr.

FOREIGN STOCKS.

Portuguese Acct. Aug. 31, 57. — Dutch Two and a Half per Cent., 51 seven-eighths.—Dutch Five per Cent., 100 seven-eighths. — Spanish, Acct. 20.—Spanish Passives, 4 seven-eighths.

MONEY MARKET.—These affairs seem to have but very little dependence on, or connexion with, our mercantile prosperity. The traders in the currency, so long as the taxes are sufficient to pay the interest of the national debt, go on speculating in security. Money is plentiful, and on good security to be had at comparatively moderate premium. There has been but little fluctuation in the prices of our funds, which should give a lesson of modesty to both parties, Whigs and Tories, seeing how little the going out of one faction, and the coming in of the other, trouble the monied interest. Foreign securities have been but little dealt in; of those that pay a dividend, people are very cautious; and those which do not, are wholly avoided. Almost all the railway shares are looking up. Even the Blackwall has a little advanced in price, though they still are at 9½ discount. We anticipate a great decline in all the public securities when Sir Robert Peel's budget shall have been promulgated. We should think that he must commence his financial operations with a new loan, which, of course, must be followed up with fresh taxes.

NEW PATENTS.

J. Chater, of the town of Nottingham, Machine Maker, and R. Gray, of the same place, Lace Manufacturer, for improvements in machinery for the purpose of making lace and other fabrics traversed, looped, or woven. June 26th, 6 months.

W. Methley and T. C. Methley, of Frith Street, Soho, Ironmongers, for improvements in machinery for raising, lowering, and moving bodies or weights. Communicated by a foreigner residing abroad. June 26th, 6 months.

M. Poole, of Lincoln's Inn, Gentleman, for improvements in producing and applying heat. Communicated by a foreigner residing abroad. June 26th, 6 months.

W. Losh, of Little Benton, Northumberland, Esquire, for improvements in the manufacture of railway wheels. June 26th, 6 months.

N. Benjamin, of Camberwell, Gentleman, for improvements in the manufacture of type. Communicated by a foreigner residing abroad. June 23th, 6 months.

W. Knight, of Durham Street, Strand, Gentleman, for an indicator for registering the number of passengers using an omnibus or other passenger vehicle. June 28th, 6 months.

C. Nickels, of York Road, Lambeth, Gentleman, for improvements in the manufacture of mattresses, cushions, paddings, or stuffings, and in carpets, rugs, and other napped fabrics. June 28th, 6 months.

W. T. Berger, of Upper Homerton, Gentleman, for improvements in the manufacture of starch. June 28th, 6 months.

T. Machell, of Soho Square, Surgeon, for improvements in raising and conveying water and other fluids. June 28th, 6 months.

G. H. Phipps, of Deptford, Engineer, for improvements in the construction of wheels for railway and other carriages. July 2nd, 6 months.

T. Hager, of Kensington, Brewer, for an improved bagatelle board. July 7th, 2 months.

G. Onions, of High Street, Shoreditch, Engineer, for improved wheels and rails for railroad purposes. July 7th, 6 months.

R. Mallet, of Dublin, Engineer, for certain improvements in protecting cast and wrought-iron and steel, and other metals, from corrosion and oxidation, and in preventing the fouling of iron ships, or ships sheathed with iron, or other ships or iron buoys in fresh or sea water. July 7th, 6 months.

W. E. Newton, of Chancery Lane, Civil Engineer, for certain improvements in the manufacture of fuel. Communicated from a foreigner residing abroad. July 7th, 6 months.

T. Fuller, of the City of Bath, Coach Maker, for certain improvements in retarding the progress of carriages under certain circumstances. July 7th, 6 months.

A. M'Nab, of Paisley, North Britain, Engineer, for an improvement or improvements in the making or construction of meters or apparatus for measuring water or other fluids. July 7th, 6 months.

C. Wheatstone, of Conduit Street, Gentleman, for improvements in producing, regulating, and applying electric currents. July 7th, 6 months.

J. Steward, of Wolverhampton, Esquire, for certain improvements in the construction of piano-fortes. July 7th, 6 months.

T. Young, of Queen Street, London, Merchant, for improvements in lamps. July 9th, 6 months.

C. Payne, of South Lambeth, Chemist, for improvements in preserving vegetable matters where metallic and earthly solutions are employed. July 9th, 6 months.

W. H. Phillips, of Manchester Street, Manchester Square, Civil Engineer, and D. Hichinbottom, of the same place, Gentleman, for certain improvements in the construction of chimneys, flues, and air-tubes, with the stoves and other apparatus connected therewith, for the purpose of preventing the escape of smoke into compartments, and for warming and ventilating buildings. July 13th, 6 months.

B. Beale, of East Greenwich, Kent, Engineer, for certain improvements in engines to be worked by steam, water, gas, or vapours. July 13th, 6 months.

M. Poole, of Lincoln's Inn, Gentleman, for improvements of steam-baths and other baths. Communicated by a foreigner residing abroad. July 13th, 6 months.

M. Berry, of Chancery Lane, Civil Engineer, for improvements in the construction of locks, latches, or such kind of fastenings for doors and gates and other purposes, to which they may be applicable. Communicated by a foreigner residing abroad. July 14th, 6 months.

T. Peckston, of Arundel Street, Strand, Bachelor of Arts, and P. Le Capelain of the same place, Coppersmith, for certain improvements in meters for measuring gas and other aeriform fluids. July 14th, 6 months.

A. Smith, of Belper, Derby, Engineer, for certain improvements in the arrangement and construction of engines to be worked by the force of steam or other fluids, which improved engines are also applicable to the raising of water and other liquids. July 21st, 6 months.

J. M'Bride, Manager of the Mersery Spinning Mills, Hutchesontown, Glasgow, for certain improvements in the machinery and apparatus for dressing and weaving cotton, silk, flax, wool, and other fibrous substances. July 21st, 4 months.

J. W. Welch, of Austin Friars, Merchant, for an improved reverberatory furnace,

to be used in the smelting of copper ore, or other ores, which are or may be smelted in reverberatory furnaces. July 21st, 6 months.

F. T. Philippi, of Belfield Hall, Calico Printer, for certain improvements in the production of sal-ammoniac, and in the purification of gas for illumination. Communicated by a foreigner residing abroad. July 21st, 6 months.

W. W. Andrews, of Wolverhampton, Ironmonger, for an improved coffee-pot. July 21st, 6 months.

W. Newton, of Chancery Lane, Civil Engineer, for certain improvements in machinery for making pins and pin nails. Communicated by a foreigner residing abroad. July 23th, 6 months.

A. B. Von Rathen, of Kingston-upon-Hull, Engineer, for improvements in high pressure and other steam-boilers, combined with a new mode or principle of supplying them with water. July 23th, 6 months.

A. B. Von Rathen, of Kingston-upon-Hull, Engineer, for a new method or methods (called by the inventor "The united Stationary and Locomotive System") of propelling locomotive carriages on railways and common roads, and vessels on rivers and canals, by the application of a power produced or obtained by means of machinery and apparatus unconnected with the carriages and vessels to be propelled. July 23th, 6 months.

MONTHLY METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL.

Kept at Edmonton. Latitude 51° 37' 32" N. Longitude 3° 51" West of Greenwich.

The mode of keeping these registries is as follows:—At Edmonton the warmth of the day is observed by means of a thermometer exposed to the north in the shade, standing about four feet above the surface of the ground. The extreme cold of the night is ascertained by a horizontal self-registering thermometer in a similar situation. The daily range of the barometer and thermometer is known from observations made at intervals of four hours each, from eight in the morning till the same time in the evening. The weather and the direction of the wind are the result of the most frequent observations. The rain is measured every morning at eight o'clock.

| 1841. | Range of Ther. | Range of Barom. | Prevailing Winds. | Rain in Inches | Prevailing Weather. |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|--|
| July | | | | | |
| 23 | 63-51 | 29.95-29.85 | W. | .245 | Morning generally clear; otherwise overcast, rain General overcast. [in the evening. |
| 24 | 63-52 | 30.08-30.02 | N. | | Generally clear. |
| 25 | 67-52 | 30.06-30.03 | N.E. | | Morning overcast, otherwise clear. |
| 26 | 69-52 | 30.05-29.98 | W. | | Generally cloudy, heavy shower about 1 P.M. |
| 27 | 69-55 | 29.95-29.91 | W. | .005 | Generally clear. |
| 28 | 70-54 | 29.79-29.76 | W. | | Generally clear, rain in the morning. |
| 29 | 67-48 | 29.72-29.69 | W. | .015 | Generally clear, rain in the afternoon. |
| 30 | 63-49 | 29.65-29.62 | W. | | Afternoon cloudy, with rain, otherwise clear. |
| 31 | 64-47 | 29.58-29.55 | W. | | |
| Aug. | | | | | |
| 1 | 65-46 | 29.88-29.70 | N.W. | .09 | Generally clear, raining frequently. [showers. |
| 2 | 67-53 | 29.88-29.76 | S.W. | .045 | Morning clear, otherwise cloudy, with heavy |
| 3 | 69-57 | 29.66-29.44 | S.W. | .405 | Overcast, raining heavily during morn. & even. |
| 4 | 67-56 | 29.75-29.33 | N.W. | .445 | Afternoon clear, otherwise overcast with rain. |
| 5 | 65-57 | 29.71-29.58 | S.W. | | Cloudy, rain in the afternoon and evening. |
| 6 | 67-56 | 29.79-29.59 | S.W. | .035 | Afternoon clear, otherwise cloudy, with rain. |
| 7 | 74-56 | 29.92-29.79 | S.W. | .04 | Clear. |
| 8 | 67-57 | 29.68-29.60 | S. | | Generally cloudy, rain at times. |
| 9 | 67-52 | 29.65-29.59 | W. | | Generally clear, frequent showers in the even. |
| 10 | 65-48 | 29.76-29.72 | S. | .06 | Clear. |
| 11 | 64-54 | 29.60-29.45 | S. | .385 | Evening clear, otherwise cloudy, with rain. |
| 12 | 62-46 | 29.88-29.80 | W. | .395 | Generally clear. |
| 13 | 65-42 | 29.84-29.76 | S.W. | | Generally cloudy, rain at times. |
| 14 | 67-45 | 29.67-29.58 | S.W. | .13 | Generally clear, raining frequently. |
| 15 | 66-42 | 29.76-29.67 | S.W. | .07 | Generally cloudy, a few drops of rain in aftern. |
| 16 | 70-52 | 29.90-29.78 | S.W. | | Generally clear. |
| 17 | 56-72 | 29.98-29.90 | S.W. | | Generally cloudy, rain in the morning. |
| 18 | 70-56 | 30.14-30.06 | S.W. | | Morning cloudy, with rain, otherwise clear. |
| 19 | 72-47 | 30.14-30.09 | W. | | Generally clear. |
| 20 | 74-53 | 29.93-29.79 | S. | | Clear. |
| 21 | 70-52 | 29.77-29.62 | S.W. | | Morning overcast, otherwise clear. |
| 22 | 65-49 | 29.86-29.84 | S.W. | | Evening cloudy, otherwise clear. |

BANKRUPTS.

FROM JULY 27 TO AUGUST 20, 1841, INCLUSIVE.

July 27.—J. Patterson, Cateaton-street, City, warehouseman.—G. Stanley, Portland-place, Kensington, manufacturer of bituminous pavement.—M. Wardall, Carey-street, Lincoln's-Inn, lodging housekeeper.—J. Heap, jun., Manchester, merchant.—W. Haskayne, Liverpool, ship chandler.—J. Woods, Round-hill, Lancashire, cattle jobber.—W. White and T. Broad, Newport, Isle of Wight, wine merchants.—J. Lloyd and W. Lloyd, Atherstone, Warwickshire, builders.—J. Bradley, Huddersfield, iron merchant.—T. Porter, Liverpool, egg merchant.—J. Gratrix, Preston, machine maker.—B. Sarson, Birmingham, ironmaster.

July 30.—J. Clemetson, Upper Thames-street, grocer.—D. Sims, Portsmouth-place, Lower Kennington lane, fish sauce and pickle dealer. H. Gurney, Upper Lisson-street, Lisson grove, licensed victualler.—H. Herrick, Prospect-place, St. George's-road, Southwark, licensed victualler.—E. Emery, Islington-green, victualler.—T. Pickstock, Clement's lane, merchant.—J. Twisse, Manchester, power loom cloth manufacturer.—T. Cave, jun. Liverpool, merchant.—A. Wyse, N. Baker, and W. S. Bentall, Newton Abbot, Devonshire, bankers. L. Llewellyn, Aberdare, Glamorganshire, maltster.—S. Chadwick, Haywood, Lancashire, cotton spinner.—O. Pigeon, Shrewsbury, tobaccoist.—R. Peart, Newark-upon-Trent, ropemaker.—T. Smith, Preston, Lancashire, slater.

Aug. 3.—J. Chittenden, jun., Three Tuns-court, Southwark, hopfactor.—J. Appleton, Walnut-tree walk, Lambeth, corndealer.—T. Peden, Berwick-street, Soho, coachmaker.—S. Thompson, Leigh-street, Burton-crescent, oilman.—S. N. Wright, Woburn, paper manufacturer.—S. H. Armitage, Wakefield, and M. Dodgson, Manchester, maltsters.—E. C. Radford, J. Radford, and J. Radford, Manchester, ironfounders.—C. Cross, Bristol, tea-dealer.—P. Mann, Leeds, army contractor.—L. Robinson, Orley, Yorkshire, grazier, innkeeper.

Aug. 6.—H. Wood and A. Wood, Basinghall-street, Blackwell-hall, factors.—G. E. Debenham, Camden-town, builder.—A. Thomson, Leadenhall-street, merchant.—P. Tagg, Tooley-street, Southwark, slopseller.—A. T. Harwood, Streatham, Surrey, lodging housekeeper.—R. T. Jones, Oxford, chemist.—W. Jennings, Bungay, Suffolk, malster.—J. Sowerby, Leeds, licensed victualler.—H. Greenaway, Bristol, painter.—W. Graburn, Downham Market, Norfolk, coal factor.—F. Stubbs, Caistor, Lincolnshire, linendraper.—S. Stocks, sen. and S.

Stocks, jun. Heaton Mersey, Lancashire, manufacturers.—A. Wise, W. S. Bentall, and R. Farwell, Ford House, Totnes, Devonshire, bankers.

Aug. 10.—T. Taylor, Royston, Hertfordshire, innkeeper.—J. A. Warren and J. F. Taylor, Little Hermitage-street, ship chandlers.—T. Farr, Manchester, silk manufacturer.—H. Ford, Manchester, linendraper.—H. Nelson, Pendleton, Lancashire, provision shop keeper.—G. B. Scholes, Lockstock Hall, Lancashire, muslin manufacturer.—T. Wilson, Liverpool, fancy shawl dealer.—J. Brooks, Bristol, British sugar manufacturer.—G. Last, Birmingham, general merchant.

Aug. 13.—G. Anton and G. D. Mitchell, Corn Exchange, Mark-lane, cornfactors.—J. Newham and G. Pearson, Ryde, Isle of Wight, linen drapers.—J. White, East Cowes, shipbuilder.—G. Newton, Martock, Somersetshire, builder.—H. Clifton, Bath Lodge, Worcester, proctor.—J. Smith, T. Edgley, and B. Smith, Manchester, Scotch and Manchester warehousemen.—A. Foster, Bridgwater, draper.—W. and J. Losh, Manchester, calico printers.—G. Thompson, South Shields, victualler.

Aug. 17.—E. Stuchfield, Church-street, Paddington-green, horse dealer.—T. Nutter, Paul-street, Finsbury-square, brewer.—F. Jones, City-road, draper.—C. Trapps, Abridge, Essex, victualler.—W. H. Lamport, Plymouth, silversmith.—J. F. Lewis, Ebley, Stroud, woollen cloth manufacturer.—T. Atkinson, Lancaster, druggist.—T. Howson, Leeds, grocer.—B. Wright, Coalbrookdale, Madely, Shropshire, draper.—H. Medley and W. Backhouse, Leeds, oil merchants.—N. Claughton, Dixon Mill, Yeadon, Yorkshire, fulling miller.—J. Crutchett, Stroud, pawnbroker.—W. Fawcett, Manchester, manufacturer.—J. Darcy and R. Dierden, Sutton, Lancashire, alkali manufacturers.—A. Casacuberta, Manchester, merchant.

Aug. 20.—M. Blood, North Audley-street, Grosvenor-square, surgeon.—C. Maybery, Earl's Court, Old Brompton, board and lodging housekeeper.—J. Holman, Burleigh-street, Strand, victualler.—R. Cook, Great George-street, Bermondsey, cooper.—A. and C. Duncan, Tokenhouse-yard, City, merchants.—H. Warburton, Harpur-hey, Manchester, joiner.—R. R. Timings, Birmingham, grocer.—J. Lea, sen., and T. Patrick, Worcester, butchers.—R. Brett, Stoke Bardolph, Nottinghamshire, corn factor.—R. C. Squibb, East Cowes, Isle of Wight, rope maker.

HISTORICAL REGISTER.

The new Parliament began to assemble on the 19th, and were occupied for some time in swearing in their members in the lower, and in the taking of oaths in the upper house. The Commons then proceeded to the choice of their speaker, which fell upon Mr. Shaw Lefevre, both sides of the house being unanimous in his reelection. On the 24th the Queen opened the parliament by commission, and addressed to both houses the following.

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" We are commanded by her Majesty to acquaint you that her Majesty has availed herself of the earliest opportunity of resorting to your advice and assistance after the dissolution of the last Parliament.

" Her Majesty continues to receive from Foreign Powers gratifying assurances of their desire to maintain with her Majesty the most friendly relations.

" Her Majesty has the satisfaction of informing you that the objects for which the Treaty of the 15th July, 1840, was concluded between her Majesty, the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Russia, and the Sultan, have been fully accomplished, and it is gratifying to her Majesty to be enabled to state, that the temporary separation which the measures taken in the execution of the Treaty created between the contracting parties and France, has now ceased.

" Her Majesty trusts that the union of the principal Powers upon all matters affecting the great interests of Europe will afford a firm security for the maintenance of peace.

" Her Majesty is glad to be able to inform you that, in consequence of the evacuation of Ghorian by the Persian troops, her Majesty has ordered her Minister to the Court of Persia to return to Teheran.

" Her Majesty regrets that the negotiations between her Plenipotentiaries in China and the Chinese Government have not yet been brought to a satisfactory conclusion, and that it has been necessary to call into action the forces which her Majesty has sent to the China seas; but her Majesty still trusts that the Emperor of China will see the justice of the demands which her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries have been instructed to make.

" Her Majesty is happy to inform you that the differences which had arisen between Spain and Portugal, about the execution of a Treaty concluded by those Powers in 1835, for regulating the navigation of the Douro, have been adjusted amicably, and with honour to both parties, by the aid of her Majesty's mediation.

" The debt incurred by the Legislature of Upper Canada, for the purpose of Public Works, is a serious obstacle to further improvements which are essential to the prosperity of the United Province. Her Majesty has authorized the Governor-General to make a communication on the subject to the Council and Assembly of Canada. Her Majesty will direct the papers to be laid before you, and trusts that your earnest attention will be directed to matters so materially affecting the welfare of Canada and the strength of the empire.

" Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

" We have to assure you that her Majesty relies with entire confidence on your loyalty and zeal to make adequate provision for the public service, as well as for the further application of sums granted by the last Parliament.

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" We are more especially commanded to declare to you that the extraordinary expenses which the events in Canada, China, and the Mediterranean have occasioned, and the necessity of maintaining a force adequate to the protection of our extensive possessions, have made it necessary to consider the means of increasing the public revenue. Her Majesty is anxious that this object should be effected in the manner least burthensome to her people; and it has appeared to her Majesty, after full deliberation, that you may at this juncture properly direct your attention to the revision of duties affecting the productions of foreign countries. It will be for you to consider whether some of these duties are not so trifling in amount as to be unproductive to the revenue, while they are vexatious to commerce. You may further examine whether the principle of protection, upon which others of these duties are founded, be not carried to an extent injurious alike to the income of the State and the interests of the people.

" Her Majesty is desirous that you should consider the laws which regulate the trade in corn. It will be for you to determine whether these laws do not aggravate the natural fluctuations of supply, whether they do not embarrass trade, derange the currency, and, by their operation, diminish the comfort and increase the privations of the great body of the community.

" Her Majesty, feeling the deepest sympathy with those of her subjects who are now suffering from distress and want of employment, it is her earnest prayer that all your deliberations may be guided by wisdom, and may conduce to the happiness of her beloved people."

On the 24th a very animated debate followed in the House of Peers, in which an amendment was moved to the effect that the House of Peers and the country had

entirely lost the confidence of her Majesty's ministry. In the debate that followed, the Duke of Wellington made himself very conspicuous, and may be said to have led the opposition. The Tories principally insisted upon the indecency of making the Queen a party to, and her pronouncing her opinions upon questions which it was peculiarly the province of the faithful and loyal Parliament to decide. This course seemed, by the report of the debates, very much to have amazed the prime minister, who, in justification of his conduct, quoted precedents. Lord Brougham made a great display of eloquence, and settled nothing. The Lords, at length, voted for the amendment, and gained a majority against the government of 72. Since this victory they have not again met.

In the Lower House the same contest, when we were going to press, was still in progress, and will be, no doubt, attended by the same results. In all the debates, the whole gist of the question seems to turn upon the policy or the impolicy of repealing or greatly ameliorating the existing Corn Laws. Party feeling, as indicated by the temper of this discussion, never seems to have been more violent, and even virulent. Our readers may rest assured that there is no bed of roses preparing for Sir Robert Peel and his expected government.

MISCELLANEOUS, PHILOSOPHICAL, &c.

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PRINTING TELEGRAPH.—A remarkably curious instrument, bearing the name of the "Electro-Magnetic Printing Telegraph," is exhibiting at the Polytechnic Institution. The object of this invention is to convey information from one place to another by means of the electrical current, in such a way, that words or sentences transmitted from one locality are instantaneously printed in another, however distant; and this, too, without the agency of any person in the place to which the correspondence is to be forwarded. The means by which this extraordinary effect is produced are simple enough. Three wires for the passage of the electric fluid are first laid between any two given places. To one end of these wires is attached a dial-plate with one revolving hand, which is kept in motion by a spring. A peg stops the hand when required; and the face of the dial-plate contains the letters of the alphabet separately arranged in a circle, each letter having a small hole in the plate, immediately underneath it, into which the peg is placed, when the revolution of the hand is to be arrested. To the other end of the wires is affixed a small frame-work, and into it are introduced a cylinder, round which the paper to be printed on is placed; also, a wheel, having the letters of the alphabet arranged regularly on its edge, and a small inking roller. All these revolve horizontally and simultaneously, the wheel with the letters being placed between the ink roller and the cylinder for paper. Motion is communicated to these parts by a pair of electro-magnets attached to them and communicating with the wires. Thus, if the word "the" is to be printed, the hand on the dial-plate is allowed to revolve until it reaches the letter *t*, beyond which it is prevented from passing by the peg. When stopped, the printer places his finger on a spring attached to the plate, which allows a current of electricity to the wheel with the letters, immediately presses the letter *t* against the paper, it having previously been inked by the roller, and then retires. The other letters are arranged in the same way until the word is complete. A peculiar part of the mechanism, and that which can hardly be explained without a diagram, relates to the passage of the galvanic current from the dial-plate to the wheel with the letters on it, in order to produce corresponding motion in both, so that the letter indicated by the dial-plate shall be printed by the other. This, however, is effected by a simple arrangement on the face of the dial-plate, which makes and breaks the current exactly in the way required. The inventor of this extraordinary machine is Mr. Alexander Bain, the chronometer-maker; and it appears that its introduction for telegraphic or other similar purposes might be attended with great success. The length of wires laid on at the Polytechnic Institution is not more than a mile; but were it the distance of a hundred or a thousand, the instantaneous effect would be the same. There are some minor particulars which require ocular inspection in order to be fully understood.

On the evening of the 25th ult., during a violent storm, which was felt at Navarres Balbaita, and other parts of the country, a heavy cloud burst, and shed, as the Madrid papers assert, an abundant shower of stones, which covered the ground for the space of a league and a half. Some of the stones are said to have weighed half a pound, injuring the cattle, and killing a great number of birds. This phenomenon, which was only a hail-storm, is, with the usual exaggeration of the Spanish papers, magnified into a miracle.